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The Shape of Things

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THE PEACE TREATY WAS SIGNED, NOT AT Versailles this time, but at Munich. This was proper, for Munich is the favorite city of the head of the victorious power. The Premiers of Great Britain, France, and Italy attended the conference. The first two were treated with a mixture of polite intransigence and jocular condescension—with sufficient courtesy, however, considering their role. The leader of Italy, Germany's chief ally, was accorded the honor he deserved as the man who arranged the meeting at which the victory was acknowledged and the peace terms dictated. The conquered nation, Czechoslovakia, was not represented at all, though its emissaries were allowed to sit in the anteroom waiting for the terms. After all, someone had to carry them back to Prague and get them signed. The conference was efficient and expeditious beyond all precedent. It took five months to remake Europe in 1919; the job was done at Munich in four hours. The terms were unjust and harsh, but a dictated peace is seldom generous. Germany is already carrying them into effect. The army of the Reich has moved into Czech territory at four points and staged a triumphal entry for Reichsführer Hitler at Asch and Eger. The whole affair—surrender, peace terms, military occupation—followed the ancient pattern of conquest. It had only one new and unusual aspect. It preceded rather than followed the war.

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THE RELIEF OF THE PEOPLES WAS EXPRESSED in hysterical demonstrations of support for the leaders who made the peace. It would be foolish to belittle this emotion. Today it rules Europe. Whatever the consequences of the Munich agreement, whatever the second thoughts of statesmen and the public, the desperate joy that swept the people of England and France, of Germany and Italy, is a political fact that must be reckoned with. Europe's fear of war is at this moment worth a million armed men to Adolf Hitler. Under other circumstances it might mean his downfall. Honest statesmen could use it to the ends of honest peace—peace by consent, by collective agreement. Today it has been exploited

to bring about and then to ratify the unqualified triumph of force. But even now the frenzy of relief is beginning to subside; voices of doubt are breaking through the roar of approval. If Chamberlain and Daladier want votes of confidence, they should demand them quickly.

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CHINA STANDS TO GAIN MATERIALLY FROM the action of the Council of the League of Nations in allowing members to apply Article XVI individually against Japan. For the League it represents a final retreat from the principles of collective security. Although the experience of the last few years has demonstrated that potential aggressors will not be checked by pressure from individual countries—such pressure must be collective if it is to be effective—in the present instance the League resolution may pave the way for greater Soviet aid to China. So far the Soviets have deliberately restricted such aid for fear of adverse public opinion in the democracies. But as a member of the League Russia is now morally obligated to exercise such restraint as it can on Japan, even to the application of military sanctions. The same obligation also rests on the democracies; if they fail to act, China has little choice but to turn to Russia. Should Japan capture Hankow, there would be increased pressure on the government from within China for an understanding with the Soviets.

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THERE CAN BE NO RAILROAD STRIKE FOR sixty days now that the President has used his powers under the Railway Labor Act to appoint a fact-finding committee. Meanwhile, a slow but steady improvement in traffic may, it is believed in Washington, permit a compromise with a wage cut less than the 15 per cent demanded by the companies. We hope this possibility will not encourage further stalling on the broader problem of the railroads. Mr. Roosevelt's recent suggestion that the unions and the carriers together should develop a legislative program seems as ominous as it was futile. The union heads naturally felt unable to join such a conference while threatened by a wage cut. Moreover, it is difficult to see how they could reach an agreement with the rail executives who are quite unable to agree among themselves on any positive means to remedy the chaos in their industry. Their inability to grasp what is happening is illustrated by the outcome of the latest attempt of the Eastern roads to boost revenues. A 25 per cent rise in passenger fares which became effective in July has driven still more travelers to other forms of transport and accelerated the decline in revenues. Now hopes are pinned on wage reductions. Although this might bring temporary salvation to some roads bordering on bankruptcy, it would leave the major problem untouched, while by effecting an important breach in the wage structure it might prove a serious obstacle to general recovery. It

seems to us that no real contribution to the problem of reorganization can be expected from the carriers themselves. Hence the sooner the Administration decides to grasp the nettle and put forward a comprehensive program of its own the better. Otherwise it is likely to find that neglect of a chronic condition necessitates an emergency operation.

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THE NATIVE SONS OF CALIFORNIA HAVE been busy developing their own species of fascism ever since the climate was discovered. Old-fashioned vigilantism has been crossed with new-fangled European repression to produce a hardy growth of 100 per cent American fascism that has brought forth prize-winning blooms, from the labor-baiting of the 1934 strike to the lynchings of San José. The most refined specimen so far is today being carefully cultivated in all three Coast states. In Washington an initiative measure bearing the harmless label of "130" has been put on the statewide ballot to be voted on November 8; in Oregon a similar measure is pending; and in California it is the Labor Organization Act. Space prevents differentiation in detail among the three bills. They variously "regulate" picketing, require the incorporation of unions, bar "outsiders" from participating in strikes, and carry every other known provision to limit labor. The fact that they patently are in violation of the National Labor Relations Act is apparently considered of no importance out where the West begins to look like Nazi Germany.

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TWENTY THOUSAND COTTON PICKERS IN three Southern states—Arkansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma—have won great gains as a result of the brief but successful sitdown strike of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union. In many counties wages were practically tripled, rising from 35 cents to 90 cents or a dollar a hundred pounds. A few isolated plantations are still holding out, but for the most part the strike is over. The highest rate will probably mean not more than \$2 a day, but that is a great increase over \$1. What is just as important, the success of the strike strengthens the union in its continuing fight against the plantation owners. These owners, through their intermediary, Senator "Cotton Ed" Smith, are now clamoring for more help from Washington. They want the government, which already holds 7,000,000 bales of cotton, to supplement the present cotton price of 8.3 cents by a subsidy which would raise it to more than 11 cents—once more the dilemma of the crop-reduction program is becoming acute. The ineffable Mr. Smith, in assailing the AAA for refusing the subsidy, roared: "What's the use of talking to people we have got to get down on bended knee to, who are not even elected by the people, when they ought to come on bended knee to us." That's the way the cotton pickers,

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most of whom are denied the vote by poll taxes, may well feel after their new demonstration of the superiority of the sitdown strike over the bended knee.

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IN THE GROWING SPECULATION OVER THE President's next appointment to the Supreme Court, the name of Felix Frankfurter assumes increasing prominence. Press support for his nomination is becoming more insistent and widespread; a poll by the Gallup Institute discloses that the legal profession itself would greet the appointment with far greater sympathy than any other that might be made. Unfortunately these expressions of opinion have been accompanied by a disturbing flurry of rumors. A syndicated columnist in the American Jewish press recently said that Mr. Frankfurter had actually declined the post now held by Justice Black and would repeat that refusal lest his acceptance aggravate anti-Semitic feeling. This report, we can state on extremely good authority, is entirely false. Only last week, however, a Scripps-Howard writer reported that several conservative Jewish leaders, animated by the same fear, had urged the President to refrain from appointing Mr. Frankfurter. If this is true, we believe that their move was as strategically misguided as it was morally reprehensible. The persons who would exploit this appointment for reactionary ends are still a tiny, if vociferous, band; it is unthinkable that their influence should outweigh the almost universal desire for Mr. Frankfurter's selection. And just because such groups are raising their voices, Mr. Roosevelt is presented with a double opportunity. By naming Mr. Frankfurter he can further increase the clarity and boldness of the court, and at the same time demonstrate his faith in the survival of democratic tolerance.

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IN SOME REACTIONARY CATHOLIC CIRCLES it seems to be the fashion to defend Nazi Germany. The Brooklyn *Tablet*, for example, made anti-Czech statements during the recent crisis which could have appeared without much change in the *Völkischer Beobachter*. We hope Catholics and others misled by them will read the moving and eloquent pastoral letter written by the hierarchy of the church in Germany and now made available by the National Catholic Welfare Conference in this country. It tells of the suppression of Catholic literature; the pressure brought on Catholics, particularly the youth, to abandon their faith; "the attacks made upon the personal honor of the Holy Father"; the economic discrimination against Catholic functionaries, business men, workers, and students; the open declaration by "authoritative personages" that the Nazi *Weltanschauung* requires "the destruction of German Catholicism"; and "unequivocal demonstrations . . . that the fight is not only

against the church but against Christianity as well." The concept of a "German God" is derided in the letter in much the same terms as those used by the ancient Greek philosopher Xenophanes in attacking polytheism. "The gods of the Ethiopians," a famous fragment of Xenophanes says, "are swarthy and flat-nosed; the gods of the Thracians are fair-haired and blue-eyed." "A German God?" the Catholic hierarchy asks. "If so, then there are as many gods as there are races and nations, too many for anyone to comprehend."

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WE REFUSE TO CONTRIBUTE EVEN ONE petal to the British Prime Minister's crown of lilies. The best that can be said for him is that he yielded to superior force, and even that is beginning to look doubtful. He seems to us an obstinate, ignorant old man equipped neither mentally nor morally for the tasks he took upon himself. Prior to his becoming Premier there is no record of his having any intimate knowledge of foreign affairs. He was an authority on municipal problems such as garbage disposal; he had wide experience in the fields of housing and public health; as Chancellor of the Exchequer he had been of great service to British business. Nevertheless, as Premier he has insisted on directing foreign policy, with his only guiding principle the fixed idea that no real issue divides Britain and the fascist powers, which, treated tactfully, will prove harmless. The value of that thesis has now been demonstrated.

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THE EFFECTIVE WORK OF BOTH PRESS AND radio during the European débâcle has been noted in these pages. To the very end, from both sources came a generous stream of facts and interpretations. The radio had the tremendous advantage of immediacy, and undoubtedly brought news of the rush of events in Europe to millions of listeners in rural districts where the newspapers, even in a crisis, give scant space to foreign affairs. Last week we mentioned specifically several of the best jobs done on the air and in the press. This week we want to add a few names to this roll of honor in the field of public enlightenment. First, Dorothy Thompson, for her discussion of the Nazi triumph in the New York *Herald Tribune* and other papers; especially her columns entitled "Peace—and the Crisis Begins," printed on Saturday, October 1, and "Chronology of the Runciman Report," on Monday, October 3. Second, Walter Lippmann, for his analysis of the effect of the Runciman report, printed on October 1. Third, Leland Stowe, who made perhaps the most useful single contribution—a compilation in the *Herald Tribune* of September 28 of Hitler's past promises and non-performances, correlated by dates and exposing with complete clarity the value of his most recent pledge.

The Treaty of Munich

EUROPE

FORGET for a moment the fate of the Czechs; consider instead the fate of Europe. The Peace of Munich carries far greater effects than the enslavement of one small nation. It is acknowledged on all sides that Hitler has gained the long-desired control of Eastern Europe. He will make his own terms with the governments of Poland and Hungary. The broken strength of the little Entente will certainly not be able to prevent German domination of the economy of Rumania and Yugoslavia; even before Munich, they had all but slipped into the line of the axis.

Think of Czechoslovakia not as a flesh-and-blood nation but as a well-guarded line of fortified mountains. It was in these cold-blooded terms that it was conceived by the victors of the Great War—whatever may have been the hopes of Masaryk and Benes and the "experts" who created its boundaries. The Czech army, brilliantly led and strongly armed, the Czech munitions industry, controlled financially in France, the Czech "Maginot line" of fortifications, built with the advice of the French general staff (but with Czech money)—these have been, in the years between Versailles and Munich, an integral part of the defense system of the Western powers in the East. On the strength of the Czech state and its military establishment, the whole structure of French post-war alliances was built. Its collapse means, in cold fact, the end of French security. As the Reich's power has increased under Hitler, the power of France has declined. Its Eastern allies have been alienated, its own policy has become dependent on British strength and British direction. Having been ruthless toward Germany when it should have been generous, it grew timid when it should have been strong. And now at last, when it most needs friends, when the threat of a rearmed Reich looms as a monstrous reality instead of a post-war fantasy, France joins Britain in turning over its eastern defenses to the dictator at Munich.

British policy has always leaned toward reconciliation with Germany; but it has been even more friendly since Hitler's rise to power. It is hard to doubt that the successive Conservative cabinets have deliberately chosen to permit the growth of Nazi domination through fear of revolution on the Continent. British tactics in Spain support this theory and are unintelligible according to any other. The Chamberlain government strongly objects to the Franco-Soviet alliance with all it might imply in case of a Continental war. It longs for a four-power pact that would finally freeze the Soviet Union out of Europe and reduce France to a minor buffer state. The Munich pact points straight toward such an arrangement. France is properly worried. Has it betrayed its friends and aban-

doned its defenses in the East only to become the least significant member of an alliance dominated by Britain and Germany?

But perhaps the chief casualty of the past week was the idea and method of collective security. With the help of Chamberlain, Daladier, and especially Bonnet, Hitler knocked out the League and successfully substituted the technique of the private deal in a back room with a gun on the table for the open negotiation of agreements. At no point in the proceedings was the machinery of collective action even set in motion. Throughout the weeks of swift collapse, the League of Nations, pompously futile, sat in session and pretended to be too busy to notice what was going on. As the actions of its chief members became known, the smaller powers scuttled for shelter, shaking off their obligations as they ran. The League repudiated its own blood-tie to what is left of the Treaty of Versailles—presumably to tempt Hitler back to Geneva—and then turned to matters more comfortably remote.

Evidence is mounting that Hitler knew in advance of Berchtesgaden all about Runciman's recommendations and Chamberlain's willingness to abandon the Czechs. He also knew that the German people were horrified at the thought of war and that the country's resources were hopelessly inadequate for a long struggle. The foreign editor of *Paris-Soir*, Jules Sauerwein, says that Hungary and insurgent Spain had served notice on Hitler that they would remain neutral, and that the Italian royal family were said to be opposed to any war against Britain and France. These factors, taken together, moved Hitler to make peace instead of war, but he was able to make a German peace. The measure of British and French resistance is the distance between the terms demanded at Godesberg and the terms now being carried into effect. There is a difference, though what it will actually amount to will only be known when the new Czech frontier is finally drawn. That Hitler retreated at all proves how little he wanted war and how much might have been gained by a resolute refusal to be bluffed or bulldozed.

THE CZECHS

The terms of the Munich agreement have been carefully detailed in every newspaper and will not be reviewed here. But some of their consequences are clear.

Whatever the result of the coming plebiscites, the Czech nation has lost its power of self-defense. From now on it must depend for its existence on a vague "guaranty" provided jointly by its enemies and by the nations that sold it out with total disregard for guaranties already given. The mighty Czech fortifications and the mountain range that served as a still stronger defense lie in the area being occupied by German troops; the military equipment in the defense lines must also be turned over to Germany.

Along with its defenses, Czechoslovakia has lost a

large part of its power of self-support. It has been transformed from an industrial into a predominantly agricultural country. The whole of the Sudeten territory along the northern and western borders is industrial. Because it is mountainous and unfit for farming, Germans were brought in centuries ago to set up small industries. None of the cities of the Sudetenland is particularly large, but textile, pottery, and glass works, paper mills, and even automobile and machine factories are scattered throughout the valleys and rural areas. At first glance it may seem reassuring that the great cities of Pilsen, Mährisch-Ostrau, and Brünn will probably remain in Czechoslovakia's hands. But the raw materials on which their industries are based will be almost entirely lost. Although little of the territory taken by Germany along the southern border of Czechoslovakia is industrial, it has big paper mills and will furnish the Reich with needed timber. The mixed-language corridors, in which Hitler demands a plebiscite, contain glass, chemical, mechanical, and textile plants.

The human results of the Franco-British sell-out include and transcend the economic and military ones. Its intimate, immediate effect has been to shock into bitter resentment and cynicism a people that has represented everything decent in European democracy. This dangerous anger will mount as the Czechs ponder the fact that they were betrayed precisely because they stubbornly and against reason trusted the honesty of their protectors. It will mount as hundreds of thousands of refugees—Czechs, German democrats or Socialists, Jews, even ex-Hitlerites—flow in from the border districts to escape the terror that engulfed the anti-Nazis in Austria. The peace terms somehow omitted safeguards for these people—though Chamberlain had mentioned them so sympathetically only a few days before he abandoned them. The lands of the refugees will be forfeit to the German occupation. Private property rights, too, were mysteriously ignored in the scramble to meet Hitler's demands at Munich; no compensation is provided for seized property—small or large. The occupation has already resulted in a hopeless rout. More than 70,000 refugees have fled into the towns of the interior leaving behind most of their possessions. Will the "great democratic powers" that urged Czechoslovakia to resist and then, a week later, forced it to surrender assume financial responsibility for the victims of their policy?

The bitter grief of the Czech people will find an echo in the countries that betrayed them. Already France and Britain are sobering up. In the chill of the morning after they are beginning to realize what has happened and what it means. The fine new "peace" brought home by the two Premiers looks a bit tarnished already. In spite of the permanent friendship sealed by the signatures of Hitler and Chamberlain, the British Prime Minister has announced that rearmament will be pushed at increased

speed. And the London *Times* has launched a campaign for peace-time conscription—to Englishmen an unmistakable symbol of tyranny and militarism. Apparently peace is but the moment after surrender to an armed threat, the brief interval before the next ultimatum. The violent attack on the government's policy by Alfred Duff Cooper, just resigned as First Lord of the Admiralty, may be taken as a storm-warning by his former colleagues and by the French government too. His indignation and shame may have little effect today, but they are a symbol of what the people of both countries will feel tomorrow.

Stranded Volunteers

IN THE new four-power Europe anything may happen; the men who carved up the sovereign state of Czechoslovakia in a few hours may go to work on Spain before the Chamberlain-Hitler love-feast is over. Rumors persist to the effect that Mussolini is fed up with General Franco and is planning to withdraw his troops at once. There can be little doubt that both Mussolini and Hitler are disgusted by Franco's prolonged failure, and news of rebellion against insurgent rule in Spanish Morocco would afford additional reason for abandoning the rebel generalissimo. But that is not the same thing as abandoning the rebel cause. Il Duce does not throw his money on the table before the cards are played, and it is not to be expected that he will actually withdraw his "non-intervening" troops from Spain without a substantial Chamberlain concession. Reports of the withdrawal of Italian airmen have in fact been denied by none other than William Carney, Franco's unofficial spokesman to America.

The Loyalists, on the other hand, have formally and actively begun the dissolution of the International Brigades. Premier Negrin has informed the League of Nations Assembly that "the Spanish government has just decided on immediate and complete withdrawal of all non-Spanish combatants taking part in the struggle in Spain on the government side." The withdrawal, which is to be under the supervision of a League of Nations Committee, will be undertaken whether or not the insurgents follow suit. In this way Negrin cuts the ground from under the fascist powers and, as he says, removes "the possibility of any pretext for people's continuing to cast doubt upon the purely national character of the cause for which the republican army is fighting."

Domestically the move should prove even more strategic. The extent to which Franco depends on foreign aid is one of the main causes of discontent in his ranks; the contrast with a purely Spanish republican army should deepen that disaffection. In a military sense the Loyalists will not suffer by the action. Numerically the internationals are not significant, and they have already

performed their function of filling the breach while the government molded a people's army.

But what of the volunteers themselves? Now that their work is done they are pouring into Paris—hungry, destitute, and in many cases ill and wounded. It is enough that these men will not be accorded by their country the heroes' welcome they deserve; they must not also be abandoned by those who know that their defense of the Spanish republic was a defense of democracy the world over.

A rough estimate places the number of American volunteers somewhere between 1,200 and 1,500, and it will cost something like \$125 per man to bring them home, with minimum medical care and the meagerest contribution toward rehabilitation. A National Campaign Committee has been formed to raise the sum of \$150,000 for this purpose. Langdon W. Post, former head of the New York Housing Authority, is chairman, and the list of vice-chairmen and sponsors includes such outstanding persons as Senator Pope, Thomas Mann, and Bishop Edward L. Parsons. We make no apology for going before our readers hat in hand in this cause, and we hope they will respond liberally. All contributions will be promptly forwarded to the committee.

Lehman Should Win

GOVERNOR LEHMAN and the New Deal have been publicly reconciled. Some painful recollections must have mingled with the embrace, for his letter opposing the President's court plan had left wounds that only a crisis could heal. There are elements of poetic justice in the fact that the occasion should have been provided by Thomas E. Dewey, whom the Governor started on the climb to fame by appointing him a special prosecutor to end the link between crime and politics in Manhattan. District Attorney Dewey has haunted the New Deal for several months. That he might run for governor cast a dark shadow toward 1940. The Republican Party, thanks to its failure to cover reaction with more than the loin-cloth of pious generality, has been unable to elect a governor in New York since 1920. The winner this year will be the first governor since the term of the office was extended from two years to four, and a Dewey victory would leave the Republicans in control of the state's political machinery and patronage in 1940, a factor that might prove of crucial importance in a close Presidential contest. It was conceded that Mr. Dewey, in his romantic role as racket buster, could probably defeat any Democratic candidate but Governor Lehman or Senator Wagner. Senator Wagner declined to run. So, until the last moment, did Governor Lehman. There were other aspirants, none of them, for one reason or another, reassuring. On September 29 Mr. Dewey accepted the

Republican nomination, but the crisis ended almost as quickly as it arose. For on September 30 Governor Lehman agreed to stand for reelection, and barring some unforeseen and improbable development the ballots would seem to be as good as counted.

If Mr. Dewey as a candidate seems somewhat Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, Governor Lehman would appear likely to evoke only the bored indifference of an electorate. Nature richly endowed him with disadvantages. He was born into a powerful banking family, a fact that would ordinarily be enough to bar him from a political career. He lacks any flair for the histrionic, but by sheer devotion to the public service has won an extraordinary public esteem. The enthusiasm with which both wings of the labor movement indorsed him is evidence of his appeal to the workers of the state. Whatever the motivations behind his attack on the President's court plan, that act itself threatened for a time to push him into the arms of the conservatives. Fortunately it now happens that the Governor's defects are if anything more valuable to the New Deal than his virtues. Labor could not do other than support him. The right, after hailing his court stand, can hardly make him an object of sharp attack.

The platforms and the keynote speeches at both state conventions were 90 per cent Throttlebottom, but the Democrats have to their advantage an excellent legislative record, while the Republicans, fresh from framing a reactionary state constitution at a convention they dominated, can hardly expect their new liberal pose to be taken seriously. District Attorney Dewey has, if anything, fallen in public esteem by taking the nomination less than nine months after his election to clean up Manhattan. His own explanation in his speech to the convention was disingenuous and unconvincing. The plea for "aggressive fact-finding" as a step toward the solution of our economic problems is uncomfortably reminiscent of Mr. Hoover's similar device for evasion—the appointment of a fact-finding committee. Governor Lehman heads a strong ticket. The replacement of the reactionary and mediocre Bray by the liberal and gifted Charles Poletti for the lieutenant governorship both prepares an able successor for Lehman and gives recognition to the American Labor Party, for which Judge Poletti acted as spokesman at the constitutional convention. To oppose Senator Wagner with John Lord O'Brian as the Republicans are doing is to insure the former's reelection. Edward Corsi can hardly hope to defeat Congressman James M. Mead for the seat left vacant by the death of Copeland. The rest of the Republican ticket is made up of men of little reputation. The Democrats retain two reactionaries, John J. Bennett as attorney general and Morris S. Tremaine as comptroller, and it is good to see that the American Labor Party, unlike the A. F. of L., will not support them. We look for a New Deal victory in November.

It's All in "Mein Kampf"

BY PAUL Y. ANDERSON

Washington, October 3

BY VIRTUE of the greatest diplomatic triumph since that achieved by the late Judas Iscariot, Neville Chamberlain has finally succeeded in losing the last world war to Germany, and has made reasonably certain of losing the next. In some quarters this is called statesmanship, and Chamberlain is hailed in London as the hero of the hour. He did succeed in getting home with his shirt and umbrella.

President Roosevelt had an important part in the events, but I question whether he is proud of the ultimate result. What he did was to induce Hitler to continue the negotiations. In doing so he must have assumed that Chamberlain and Daladier would negotiate—not accept a demand for unconditional surrender.

If there has been a more craven spectacle in modern times I cannot recall it. If Chamberlain is unable to perceive the criminal folly of his capitulation and its tragic consequences for democracy, he must be utterly blind. But that hardly seems possible. There is another and more sinister alternative. It is that he does not really believe in democracy. The influence of the Cliveden set upon the present British government has long been an open scandal. The adoration of these lily-fingered aristocrats for Hitler and his methods is well known and has been openly expressed. It appears that it was not merely poor Czechoslovakia which was sold down the river, but democracy itself.

Is Chamberlain simple-minded enough to believe Hitler when he says that he has no further territorial ambitions in Europe? If so, he should read "Mein Kampf." Thus far Hitler has followed its outline as precisely as a carpenter follows a blueprint. Will he continue to follow it? What rational person can suppose otherwise? Who is going to stop him now? He has got the rich Sudeten industrial region, and he can reach over and take the Skoda works any time he is ready. Czechoslovakia has been destroyed economically. Whether it can continue to exist politically depends on Hitler's pleasure. Certainly it can exist only in a miserable fashion.

Hitler's ultimate objectives—as everyone knows who has read his book—are, first, possession or control of the Rumanian oil fields; second, possession of the Ukraine; third and finally, German domination of Europe if not the world. The road to Rumania is now open. The Bohemian bastion has fallen—and fallen in the same way that was once planned for West Point. Very soon, unless I am mistaken, Hungarian "opinion" will become

aroused over the cruel fate of the Magyars in Rumania. Hitler, with his new and tender concern for oppressed minorities and his passionate devotion to the principle of self-determination, surely will not fail his friend Horthy—especially if they have a proper understanding in advance. Result: Hungary will get the Rumanian Magyars and Hitler will get the Rumanian oil. He will then have everything he needs except agricultural lands. Those of the Ukraine are the richest in the world, and they lie just across the Rumanian border.

At this stage, however, he may run into trouble. The Russians may fight. Whether Russia can lick the new Germany single-handed is certainly debatable. Military men here do not seem to think it can. They point out that modern wars are fought on an industrial basis. German industry, perhaps the most efficient and highly organized in the world, is far superior to Russia's. Some experts believe the Russian fighting machine would collapse in a few months if matched with Germany's. Indeed, some of them say that a conviction of that fact was one of the main reasons for the surrender at Munich.

I must say that I never had the slightest faith in Chamberlain. At the very moment when the sentimentalists were being reduced to tears by his magnificent radio theatricals, I was saying: "He will still sell the Czechs out." It is edifying to recall some of those theatricals in the light of subsequent events. His most impressive line was that in which he declared that Britain would never yield to "fear of force." Threatened, she would fight. Then what happened? Chamberlain returned to Germany, asked Hitler if he still intended to march unless he got what he wanted, and Hitler said he did; so Chamberlain said all right, he could have what he wanted. If ever there was a more hypocritical and pusillanimous performance it has escaped my notice.

Senator Borah thinks that Chamberlain simply doesn't understand Hitler at all. Borah believes that Chamberlain's mind is cast in a formalistic pattern, and that he thinks in terms of negotiations and agreements carried out by gentlemen in the approved manner of high-school history books, whereas Hitler is completely realistic and ruthless, and thinks no more of breaking a promise than he would of breaking a kitten's back. All his moves are calculated to achieve his objectives, and he is entirely devoid of scruples. Borah thinks Chamberlain is completely deceived about Hitler. Well, at least that is the most charitable explanation that I have heard.

Where do these events leave France? The cold, un-

palatable truth is they have reduced France to the status of a second-class power. Its system of alliances is gone. Because of the perfidy of its statesmen there isn't another nation in the world that would trust it. It has virtually become a British protectorate. Here again we find Hitler attaining one of the ends set forth in "Mein Kampf." A cardinal point in German policy, he declared, must be the isolation of France. That has now been

accomplished. France will continue to be a place to be visited by tourists, and the excellence of its food and wine doubtless will remain unimpaired, but it will no longer be one of the great powers. Whether it will be permitted to keep its colonies probably will depend on the arrangements made between London and Berchtesgaden. It has been a sad week for democracy, and sadder ones probably are in store.

France's Tragic Decline

BY ALEXANDER WERTH

Paris, October 2

DALADIER, returning from Munich on Friday, made a triumphant entry into Paris, the people waving flags and shouting, *Vive la France, vive la paix*. It might have been more appropriate if he had sneaked into Paris by the underground with his hat well over his face, at least if the Munich agreement to dismember Czechoslovakia is examined in its historical perspective. But Bonnet, Czechoslovakia's chief betrayer, got the radio to announce the route of entry and, sitting beside Daladier in the automobile, smiled with obvious self-satisfaction. Despite the cheering and flag-waving, which are clearly comprehensible after several days of visualizing imminent air raids on Paris, an undercurrent of uneasiness was discernible in the crowd, especially among the working people. There seemed to be a realization of the consequences of Czechoslovakia's betrayal—the loss of France's allies and prestige in Eastern Europe and its virtual isolation except for the British alliance, which itself has been rendered less secure. That afternoon many Parisians must have scratched their heads when they saw a photograph in the *Paris-Soir* of Daladier signing the Munich agreement under Hitler's and Göring's self-satisfied grins and read the accompanying article, entitled "Peace with Honor," which proposed a public subscription for a French villa to be presented to Chamberlain.

Many Parisians rightly feel that a decisive crisis was grossly mismanaged from the outset by the French government and that the real battle was lost at Berchtesgaden. If on September 13, the day after Hitler's Nürnberg speech, Bonnet and Chautemps in the Cabinet and wire-pullers like Flandin and Caillaux had not won the day over Mandel and Reynaud, who demanded substantial mobilization, all might have been different. Daladier, faced with a conflict inside the Cabinet, lost his head and asked Chamberlain to take the lead. Since Chamberlain was not Czechoslovakia's ally and secretly had always favored the cession of the Sudetenland, this

move virtually spelled repudiation of the Czech alliance. Chamberlain went to Berchtesgaden believing that France was unwilling to fight for Czechoslovakia under any circumstances, an impression strongly confirmed by the tremendous defeatist campaign in the Paris press inspired by Bonnet and Flandin, as well as by big business, fascist elements, and German cash. Hitler, who was equally aware of the French government's disposition, presented demands hitherto inconceivable. Daladier and Bonnet went to London on September 18 to approve the Berchtesgaden plan, and allowed it to be inferred afterward that the English had bullied them into it. This is untrue; resistance was possible since both Halifax and Vansittart were hypocritical of the proposals.

These proposals actually marked the destruction of Czechoslovakia. Nevertheless, the greater part of the French press continued to proclaim them the height of statesmanship and confused the public mind regarding the real issue by irrelevant talk about the Sudetens and President Benes's dilatory tactics. This also was largely the work of Bonnet, who the next day sent to Prague an ultimatum demanding acceptance of the Berchtesgaden plan. This shameful treatment of an ally produced the first outburst of public resentment in France, and three ministers—Reynaud, Mandel, and Ribes—offered their resignations. Godesberg followed, and though the damage had already been done, Hitler's arrogance stiffened French opinion immensely. On the urgent demand of the generals, who perhaps hoped that the Berchtesgaden plan might now be off, and of those in the Cabinet who advocated firmness, Daladier ordered partial mobilization. The people and the reservists showed an admirable spirit, which was, however, not reflected in the press.

Then followed the tragic days from Sunday to Wednesday, when war appeared imminent. Chamberlain's envoy, Sir Horace Wilson, returned from Berlin on Tuesday with the comment that Hitler was raving mad. There was a strong suspicion that this madness was part of a bluff, and that Hitler knew that Germany was incapable



MM. Bonnet and Daladier

of winning against an Anglo-French-Russian-Czech coalition. Nevertheless, this madness was an incalculable element making war still possible. Another factor that kept the danger alive was Hitler's conceivable belief that his Siegfried line would succeed in immobilizing his western enemies while a knockout could be delivered to Czechoslovakia—whereupon a peace offer would be made to the West. But this theory minimized Russia's importance. Chamberlain's final move was the appeal to Mussolini, who arranged the Munich conference.

For Mussolini this arrangement solved innumerable difficulties, especially in view of the anti-war and anti-German feeling which had been mounting among the Italians. In Munich Hitler got all his Berchtesgaden demands plus most of those made at Godesberg. The slight modification of the latter demands constituted Daladier's "peace with honor."

Munich represents a turning-point in the post-war history of France. It is perhaps a concluding episode in its decline as a great European power which began with the reoccupation of the Rhineland in March, 1936. That move handicapped France immensely strategically and would have made direct aid to the Czechs today very difficult. Nevertheless, before Munich Germany was still susceptible to blockade treatment, but that is no longer true with the Czech and Polish, and probably the Russian, alliances lost. France's position is extremely precarious now. After the Munich terms Chamberlain

considered the French alliance alone an insufficient safeguard for British security. The Anglo-German declaration of friendship which followed was a severe shock to the French. Doubtless it was prompted largely by Chamberlain's fear that the Germans would denounce the naval agreement, which Hitler had threatened to do twice during the past month, but it is also an indication of Chamberlain's lack of confidence in France's military and economic strength and a desire for reassurance elsewhere. This reassurance is doubtless precarious, as it is based on an agreement with crooks and on a four-power pact policy in which France is a reluctant and helpless fourth partner, obliged to follow England without England's being obliged always to consult France.

A British politician identifiable as Winston Churchill warned the French reactionary deputy Kerillis a fortnight ago that "the Czech affair is much more serious than is imagined. For three centuries British policy has been based on the balance of power. But such a policy was possible only with a solid *point d'appui* on the Continent. Watching the reactions of the French and the opinions of the newspapers, we fear that such a basis is perhaps non-existent. The time may come for a drastic change in historical tradition. Instead of resisting the dominating power, we may try to come to an agreement with it."

Some observers think that this agreement with Germany may be attempted at Russia's expense; others even think at the expense of the French colonial empire, although France's own security is essential to England. Others believe that the Anglo-German agreement is the only way for England to prevent Italy's playing the balance-of-power game. Whatever Chamberlain's new policy may be, it will be a million miles removed from the idea of collective security. Ultimately England and France will be the great losers in the four-power policy, the adoption of which has always been Mussolini's greatest ambition. France, which has been incapable of any constructive diplomacy during the past few months and which gave England the lead, is now totally paralyzed, and for its independence must rely solely on the good graces of England, which in turn must largely depend on Hitler's and Mussolini's promises. Such is the price paid for the incompetent handling of the Czech crisis.

The ambition of the German and Italian fascists to isolate France is virtually fulfilled, but most papers are still slobbering over the Munich "victory" and concealing from the people the fact that France has never before been in such a tragic position internationally—a Portugal without Portugal's security. England will soon realize, as the resigning First Lord of the Admiralty, Alfred Duff Cooper, has already realized, the folly of Chamberlain's four-power policy, but the realization will be perhaps too late unless the United States takes a vigorous lead to save the values of Western civilization.

United States vs. Alcoa

BY JAMES WECHSLER

I

THROUGHOUT his political lifetime Senator Tom Walsh was the aluminum trust's most intransigent enemy. Few legislators have waged so lonely, so persistent, so picturesque, and so ultimately disheartening a battle. For Alcoa—symbol of the Aluminum Company of America—was not merely supreme in its own region of industry; it was a far-flung empire which listed Washington among its subservient dominions. When Andrew Mellon, its financial overlord, became Secretary of the Treasury, the social note of a decade was written, announcing the marriage of monopoly and government. Walsh's anger was generously permitted to appear in the pages of the *Congressional Record*; Mellon could always trot across the thin strip of grass which separated the Treasury Department from the White House.

With the advent of the Roosevelt Administration, Alcoa for the first time faced a threat commensurate with its power. Walsh, who had stubbornly accumulated an arsenal of documents with which to attack the nation's number one monopoly, was at once designated attorney general; his appointment was expected to revive the most notorious lost cause of the 1920's. The rejoicing was tragically premature. It was halted by Walsh's sudden death, which occurred before he took office.

There remained, nevertheless, an impressive heritage and a formidable indictment—the Senator's anti-Alcoa library. Shortly after Walsh's death, his secretary received a call purporting to come from the Department of Justice, instructing her to assemble his files on the aluminum trust. She did so promptly, then closed the office and left for the day. Overnight those files inexplicably vanished. Their real fate has never been determined; the government never saw them again.

These episodes—Walsh's untimely death and the disappearance of his file—strangely dramatize the immunity which has fostered Alcoa's rise. But the era of good fortune and bad prosecution may now be nearing its close. This month, just fifty years after the formation of the Pittsburgh Reduction Company, from which Alcoa's enormous structure was ultimately derived, the federal government resumed its prosecution of the aluminum trust for large-scale violations of the Sherman Act. Most of the politicians who used their last drop of whitewash to protect Alcoa have left Washington, superseded by men who are pushing the most ambitious anti-trust prosecution ever launched. The defendant is not merely Alcoa,

not merely its myriad subsidiaries, not merely an isolated area of heretofore invincible monopoly. The defendants are all those economic autocracies which the anti-trust laws have hitherto failed to curb.

These long-term aspects of the proceedings are as plainly perceived in Wall Street as in Washington. They were in evidence last spring when the trial got under way. The story of Alcoa's development set forth in this article is based upon the charges embodied in the opening statement of the government's young prosecutor, Walter L. Rice, who at thirty-four already has behind him the notable triumph of the Sugar Institute case.

Is the Aluminum Company of America a monopoly? Does it demand either systematic dissolution or social regulation? The questions indicate the gap between legal lore and the facts of economic life. The basic facts are that Alcoa owns the four plants which produce virgin aluminum in the United States; its sister company, Aluminium Ltd. of Canada, operates the only other such plants on this continent. One need not probe much farther to understand the nature of the trust's supremacy. Yet these facts offer no decisive clue to the outcome of this trial. In a half-century of legal debate stirred by the anti-trust laws no consistent, workable criteria of legal judgment have emerged. In our economic processes the sheer fact of monopoly control is vital; in the courts the nebulous question of intent has steadily loomed large.

After fifty years Alcoa is more than a streamlined corporation; it has built up an imposing superstructure of forced loyalties, popular prejudices, and concealed influence. Consider all the difficulties that have hampered the preparation of the government's case. More than fifty witnesses who could have shed damaging light on Alcoa's operations died while the so-called anti-trust staffs of Harding and Coolidge were flashing a green light to Alcoa's rulers. Those who have survived are frequently almost as inarticulate. Alcoa can buy off dissenters, threaten its critics, take over the fortresses from which hostile guns might be fired. There is, for example, a man named Robert J. Anderson who was once slated to play a leading role in this trial. Squeezed out of business by Alcoa, he was not merely a symbol of the empire's ruthlessness toward minor competitors but an unimpeachable expert. Anderson contended that if the price of aluminum were reduced five cents a pound, the market would expand fivefold. Such testimony would obviously have grave bearing upon Alcoa's role as price-

fixer. Appreciating this danger, Alcoa not long before the trial began quietly placed Anderson on its pay roll; the government thereupon decided to dispense with his testimony.

George D. Haskell might have been an even more formidable witness. In the 1920's Haskell made a daring effort to establish a genuine rival to Alcoa in the manufacture of aluminum. So devastating was the treatment he received that he carried his grievances to court for a protracted legal battle. While Haskell has actually appeared at the current trial, his testimony was merely a reaffirmation of charges to which he had sworn in his own suit. He could scarcely have been expected to develop these accusations since he now receives \$20,000 annually as an "adviser" to Alcoa. And the law firms which represented Haskell have been similarly hypnotized; two of Haskell's principal attorneys now receive annual retainers from this benevolent institution.

It is frequently unnecessary to place prospective witnesses on the pay roll. Many will get the point for nothing; they will be sufficiently influenced by the knowledge that Alcoa can shatter whatever business they conduct. If they seem recalcitrant, a single image is likely to bring back their timidity—the image of a man who once owned a million-dollar aluminum plant, then dropped out of sight. When government investigators found him, he was scrubbing floors at \$1.50 a day, his penalty for doubting that Alcoa's word is the aluminum industry's law.

Even more extraordinary perhaps is the extent to which Alcoa's influence transcends the boundaries of the industry. There was the case of Professor Wallace of Harvard, who had conducted extensive research in the aluminum field. Word leaked out that certain passages in a book he was preparing would reflect discredit on Alcoa. The Harvard Overseers were promptly besieged with admonitions and threats to compel revision of the text. It was revised.

These impediments to prosecution are real, but they would be less damaging if earlier administrations had not stacked the cards so flagrantly in Alcoa's behalf. The only important federal intervention occurred in 1912: during that high tide of trust-busting a consent decree was obtained outlawing a series of restrictive agreements. Alcoa took this decree no more seriously than did succeeding national administrations. As the surge of anti-trust emotions receded, administrators became aggressively cynical or dutifully reconciled. A typical sequence began in 1924 when the Federal Trade Commission published a report on the high cost of house furnishings. Unlike most reports bearing upon Alcoa, this document was vigorous and forthright. Its publication provoked audible demand for federal inquiry into Alcoa's whole domain. The Department of Justice promptly named an investigator to probe the charges. After toiling with what

Walsh called "amazing leisureliness," the investigator announced that everyone in the industry was satisfied with Alcoa's behavior. Suspicious of this conclusion, Harlan F. Stone, then Attorney General, indicated a desire to press the matter farther. He was promptly elevated to the Supreme Court.

The post-war years were replete with such case histories in secret government. Ultimately the incongruities of Mr. Mellon's dual personality became too glaring and he was dispatched to the Court of St. James's. By that time the last efforts of competitors in the aluminum industry had been effectively thwarted; the Mellon era supplied Washington with a series of government reports, signed by government officials and presumably written by them, testifying to the impeccable integrity of Mr. Mellon's business. They are now Alcoa's prize exhibits to prove that prosecution is unwarranted.

Aluminum is derived from an ore called bauxite, which is reduced to virgin aluminum through an electrolytic process which requires immense resources of inexpensive power. The quest for supremacy in the aluminum industry therefore involved two fundamental achievements: control of abundant bauxite areas and access to cheap water power. It was a corollary that possible competitors should be barred from use of the same resources.

To what extent these horizons lured the founders of the Pittsburgh Reduction Company in 1888 it is fruitless to speculate. The Pittsburgh venture was not too promising a child; capitalized at only \$20,000 it showed few signs of a great future. Within two years, however, its prospects had been fundamentally altered, for in 1890 it was adopted by the Mellon family and endowed with a good name and valuable connections. From that year its development showed the customary pattern of monopoly. Its first act was to obtain the second of two patents governing the manufacture of aluminum. One it already owned; the other it purchased from another firm for \$250,000 and a lavish royalty agreement.

This was an important beginning, but the safeguards against competition which it provided were at best temporary. The Pittsburgh Reduction Company, which soon afterward became the Aluminum Company of America, quickly prepared to protect its hegemony against potential rivals whose strength might assume menacing proportions when the patents expired in 1909. Such opposition never materialized. The General Chemical Company owned large bauxite deposits; in 1905 that company signed a pact with Alcoa pledging to refrain from selling bauxite to any other manufacturer of aluminum. The Pennsylvania Salt Manufacturing Company appeared to constitute an even more imposing threat since it owned both bauxite and cryolite deposits sufficient for large-scale production of aluminum; in 1907 that company, in

return for vast purchases by Alcoa, promised to keep out of the aluminum business and to sell no alumina—the metal in the stage before the electrolytic process—to any of Alcoa's competitors. In 1909 Alcoa completed the rout of its incipient enemies; under an agreement with the Norton Company it acquired the stock of the Republic Mining and Manufacturing Company, still another owner of bauxite deposits. Although Republic was capitalized at only \$100,000, Alcoa paid \$312,000 for an enterprise which is today Alcoa's major subsidiary in bauxite mining.

While thus eliminating any sources of future conflict, the aluminum magnates still faced the task of making their conquests pay. In its early years Alcoa found no great demand for virgin aluminum to convert into finished products. It proceeded to create this demand by entering the fabricating business. This move also served to lay the foundations of the structure of monopoly, as Arthur V. Davis recognized at the time: "We expect competition in the aluminum business and we are going to take over for consolidation all the foundries, so that no matter who goes into the aluminum business they will have no one to sell their product to."

These considerations dictated the birth of the Aluminum Castings Company on May 29, 1909, a concern which represented the consolidation, under Alcoa's guidance, of six large foundries. Alcoa broadly adhered to the terms of the consolidation agreement, under which it promised to hold no more than 50 per cent of the stock in this enterprise for ten years. When that interval had elapsed, its patience was rewarded. In 1919, having assumed a controlling interest in the company, Alcoa launched an operation which is jovially called the "squeeze." Although the company had prospered until Alcoa assumed outright control over its affairs, it suddenly began to lose money after the 1919 deal was consummated. In that boom year alone it lost \$2,500,000. For this loss there were abundant compensations—for Alcoa. In reality it was manipulating the spread between the price of virgin aluminum and the price of the finished product—made by the Castings Company—to smash rival producers of similar products.

These maneuvers were supplemented by others. Shortly after the establishment of Aluminum Castings Company, Alcoa organized the Aluminum Goods Manufacturing Company. In the making of aluminum specialties the New Jersey Aluminum Company had played a major role; its owners were persuaded to sell out and to pledge to stay out of the business "east of Denver." Soon afterward Arthur V. Davis and Roy A. Hunt, chieftains of Alcoa, assumed prominent posts on the board of the Aluminum Goods Company.

In baseball the "squeeze" play is fraught with risk; in the aluminum industry it became a terroristic method of discipline applied by Alcoa with impunity in ensuing

years, especially to those who sought entrance into the business of rolling aluminum into sheets. The Standard Aluminum Company made such an attempt, and as early as 1913 it began to encounter difficulties. When its officials sought aid from Arthur V. Davis, he reminded them that Alcoa "takes care of its friends" and that they did not belong in that special category. Their debts to Alcoa mounted; their resources ebbed; they met increasing obstacles in trying to obtain raw materials. To ease the pain of strangulation Standard sold out to the Aluminum Manufacturing Company (read Alcoa). But Standard's owners, making another desperate bid to survive, set up a new rolling mill in St. Louis. Again the "squeeze" began. By 1919 the St. Louis enterprise belonged to the past. Alcoa was leading a double life with eminent success. As the sole producer of virgin aluminum it fixed its own price. As a large-scale manufacturer of the finished product it could relentlessly manipulate the differential. This was, and is, an invincible combination.

Shortly before the World War, Alcoa sighted a new challenge to its already affluent empire. International amity—among the aluminum kings—had once more broken down: French and German interests, attracted by the American market, set up the Southern Aluminum Company to enter the field against Alcoa. They found a strategic site in North Carolina and inaugurated an elaborate construction program. Alcoa's patriotism was outraged. The outbreak of the European war provided the signal for the demolition of so militant an aggressor. Having already spent six million dollars on the enterprise, the foreign interests still needed seven million more. With the onset of war, money was scarce in their native countries; the only way they could escape from the trap was to sell out at a loss and salvage some part of a bad investment.

Enter Alcoa. With the situation ripe for a merciless bargain, Alcoa breathed warmth and charity. Instead of cracking down savagely, the American aluminum trust agreed to pay the French and Germans for every dollar they had expended here, including preliminary prospecting expenses, and to assume all outstanding obligations. Of course this was extravagant overpayment, as Alcoa realized, for it later sought to get a tax refund on the ground that it had paid \$1,700,000 more than the property was worth. But why not hang the expense? This wasn't an isolated purchase. It gave Alcoa domination of a valuable site, richly suited to a potential competitor, and removed from this continent the representatives of the nation best fitted to combat Alcoa, since the French possess important bauxite deposits at home. Supplementary to these accomplishments was the acquisition of control over additional favorable water-power regions.

The water-power acquisition was incidental to this transaction; it was not incidental to Alcoa's general policy.

As early as 1895 Alcoa's lust for such sites was frankly demonstrated; as late as 1938 the social issue created by this quest for cheap power was being argued in the New York State constitutional convention. It was in 1895 that the Niagara Falls Hydraulic Power and Manufacturing Company negotiated a handsome arrangement with Alcoa and pledged not to sell power to other aluminum firms. Seven years later Alcoa invaded Canada, obtaining a preferential contract from the Shawinigan Falls Power Company. A sixty-two-year agreement with Niagara Hydraulic sealed in 1905 gave Alcoa sensationally low rates and simultaneously barred its competitors from the same resources; in 1906 Alcoa simply took over the St. Lawrence River Power Company and a number of other power companies in the same area. When Alcoa obtained riparian rights on the Long Sault Rapids of the St. Lawrence, however, rumblings of public hostility became audible; they have never subsided. That site would have given Alcoa sufficient electric

energy to produce ten times the world's consumption of aluminum. So limitless an adventure had obviously no relation to Alcoa's real needs.

Alcoa's penetration of other regions has encountered no resistance of similar proportions or effectiveness. Despairing of the Long Sault enterprise, Alcoa in 1929 made friends with the Niagara Hudson Corporation, which controls water power on both the American and Canadian sides of Niagara Falls; today Alcoa owns 250,000 shares of its stock. In the same interval Alcoa has been acquiring large-scale riparian rights on the Tennessee River and obtaining sites adequate for the construction of several power plants.

By 1924 Alcoa's command of American water-power sites was so well established that potential rivals were forced to turn to Canada for power. When they did so, they ran headlong into the Shawinigan Company, one of Alcoa's numerous allies.

[Part II of this article will appear next week.]

Living Philosophies

III. LIFE CAN BE WORTH LIVING

BY JULIAN HUXLEY

I BELIEVE that life can be worth living. I believe this in spite of pain, squalor, cruelty, unhappiness, and death. I do not believe that it is necessarily worth living, but only that for most people it can be.

I also believe that man, as individual, as group, and collectively as mankind, can achieve a satisfying purpose in existence. I believe this in spite of frustration, aimlessness, frivolity, boredom, sloth, and failure. Again I do not believe that a purpose inevitably inheres in the universe or in our existence, or that mankind is bound to achieve a satisfying purpose, but only that such a purpose can be found.

I believe that there exists a scale or hierarchy of values, ranging from simple physical comforts up to the highest satisfactions of love, aesthetic enjoyment, intellect, creative achievement, virtue. I do not believe that these are absolute, or transcendental in the sense of being vouchsafed by some external power or divinity; they are the product of human nature interacting with the outer world. Nor do I suppose that we can grade every valuable experience into an accepted order, any more than I can say whether a beetle is a higher organism than a cuttlefish or a herring. But just as it can unhesitatingly be stated that there are general grades of biological organization, and that a beetle is a higher organism than a sponge, or a human being than a frog, so I can assert,

with the general consensus of civilized human beings, that there is a higher value in Dante's "Divina Commedia" than in a popular hymn, in the scientific activity of Newton or Darwin than in solving a crossword puzzle, in the fulness of love than in sexual gratification, in selfless than in purely self-regarding activities—although each and all can have their value of a sort.

I do not believe that there is any absolute of truth, beauty, morality, or virtue, whether emanating from an external power or imposed by an internal standard. But this does not drive me to the curious conclusion, fashionable in certain quarters, that truth and beauty and goodness do not exist, or that there is no force or value in them.

I believe that there are a number of questions that it is no use our asking, because they can never be answered. Nothing but waste, worry, or unhappiness is caused by trying to solve insoluble problems. Yet some people seem determined to try. I recall the story of the philosopher and the theologian. The two were engaged in disputation and the theologian used the old quip about a philosopher resembling a blind man, in a dark room, looking for a black cat—which wasn't there. "That may be," said the philosopher; "but a theologian would have found it."

Even in material matters of science we must learn to

ask the right questions. It seemed an obvious question to ask how animals inherit the result of their parents' experience, and enormous amounts of time and energy have been spent on trying to give an answer to it. It is, however, no good asking the question, for the simple reason that no such inheritance of acquired characters exists. The chemists of the eighteenth century, because they asked themselves the question, "What substance is involved in the process of burning?" became involved in the mazes of the phlogiston theory: they had to ask "what sort of process is burning?" before they could see that it did not involve a special substance but was merely a particular case of chemical combination.

When we come to what are usually referred to as fundamentals, the difficulty of not asking the wrong kind of question is much increased. Among most African tribes, if a person dies, the only question asked is, "Who caused his death, and by what form of magic?"; the idea of death from natural causes is unknown. Indeed, the life of the less-civilized half of mankind is largely based on trying to find an answer to a wrong question: "What magical forces or powers are responsible for good or bad fortune, and how can they be circumvented or propitiated?"

I do not believe in the existence of a god or gods. The conception of divinity seems to me, though built up out of a number of real elements of experience, to be a false one, based on the quite unjustifiable postulate that there must be some more or less personal power in control of the world. We are confronted with forces beyond our control, with incomprehensible disasters, with death, and also with ecstasy, with a mystical sense of union with something greater than our ordinary selves, with sudden conversion to a new way of life, with the burden of guilt and sin. In theistic religions all these elements of actual experience have been woven into a unified body of belief and practice in relation to the fundamental postulate of the existence of a god or gods.

I believe this fundamental postulate to be nothing more than the result of asking a wrong question: "Who or what rules the universe?" So far as we can see, it rules itself, and indeed the whole analogy with a country and its ruler is false. Even if a god does exist behind or above the universe as we experience it, we can have no knowledge of such a power; the actual gods of historical religions are only the personifications of impersonal facts of nature and of facts of our inner mental life.

Similarly with immortality. With our present faculties we have no means of giving a categorical answer to the question whether we survive death, much less the question of what any such life after death will be like. That being so, it is a waste of time and energy to devote ourselves to the problem of achieving salvation in the life to come. However, just as the idea of god is built out of bricks of real experience, so too is the idea of salvation.

If we translate salvation into terms of this world, we find that it means achieving harmony between different parts of our nature, including its subconscious depths and its rarely touched heights, and also achieving some satisfactory adjustment between ourselves and the outer world, including not only the world of nature but the social world of man. I believe it to be possible to "achieve salvation" in this sense, and right to aim at doing so, just as I believe it possible and valuable to achieve a sense of union with something bigger than our ordinary selves, even if that something be not a god but an extension of our narrow core to include in a single grasp ranges of outer experience and inner nature on which we do not ordinarily draw.

But if God and immortality be repudiated, what is left? That is the question usually thrown at the atheist's head. The orthodox believer likes to think that nothing is left. That, however, is because he has only been accustomed to think in terms of his orthodoxy.

In point of fact, a great deal is left.

That is immediately obvious from the fact that many men and women have led active, or self-sacrificing, or noble, or devoted lives without any belief in God or immortality. Buddhism in its uncorrupted form has no such belief; nor did the great nineteenth-century agnostics; nor do the orthodox Russian Communists; nor did the Stoics. Of course, the unbelievers have often been guilty of selfish or wicked actions; but so have the believers. And in any case that is not the fundamental point. The point is that without these beliefs men and women may yet possess the mainspring of full and purposive living, and just as great a sense that existence can be worth while as is possible to the most devout believers.

I would say that this is much more readily possible today than in any previous age. The reason lies in the advances of science.

No longer are we forced to accept the external catastrophes and miseries of existence as inevitable or mysterious; no longer are we obliged to live in a world without history, where change is only meaningless. Our ancestors saw an epidemic as an act of divine punishment; to us it is a challenge to be overcome, since we know its causes and that it can be controlled or prevented. The understanding of infectious disease is entirely due to scientific advance. So, to take a very recent happening, is our understanding of the basis of nutrition, which holds out new possibilities of health and energy to the human race. So is our understanding of earthquakes and storms; if we cannot control them, we at least do not have to fear them as evidence of God's anger.

Some, at least, of our internal miseries can be lightened in the same way. Through knowledge derived from psychology children can be prevented from growing up with an abnormal sense of guilt and so making life a burden both to themselves and to those with whom they

come into contact. We are beginning to understand the psychological roots of irrational fear and cruelty; some day we shall be able to make the world a brighter place by preventing their appearance.

The ancients had no history worth mentioning. Human existence in the present was regarded as a degradation from that of the original Golden Age. Down even to the nineteenth century what was known of human history was regarded by the nations of the West as an essentially meaningless series of episodes sandwiched into the brief space between the Creation and the Fall, a few thousand years back, and the Second Coming and Last Judgment, which might be on us at any moment and in any case could not be pushed back for more than a few thousand years into the future. In this perspective a millennium was almost an eternity. With such an outlook no wonder life seemed, to the great mass of humanity, "nasty, brutish, and short," its miseries and shortcomings merely bewildering unless illuminated by the illusory light of religion.

Today human history merges back into pre-history, and pre-history again into biological evolution. Our time scale is profoundly altered. A thousand years is a short time for pre-history, which thinks in terms of hundreds of thousands of years, and an insignificant time for evolution, which deals in ten-million-year periods. The future is extended equally with the past; if it took over a thousand million years for primeval life to generate man, man and his descendants have at least an equal allowance of time before them.

Most of all, the new history has been a basis of hope. Biological evolution has been appallingly slow and appallingly wasteful. It has been cruel; it has generated the parasites and the pests as well as the more agreeable types. It has led life up innumerable blind alleys. But in spite of this it has achieved progress. In a few lines whose number has steadily diminished with time it has avoided the cul-de-sac of mere specialization and arrived at a new level of organization, more harmonious and more efficient, from which it could again launch out toward greater control, greater knowledge, and greater independence. Progress is, if you will, all-round specialization. Finally, but one line was left which was able to achieve further progress; all the others had led up blind alleys. This was the line leading to the evolution of the human brain.

This at one bound altered the perspective of evolution. Experience could now be handed down from generation to generation; deliberate purpose could be substituted for the blind sifting of selection; change could be speeded up ten-thousand-fold. In man evolution could become conscious. Admittedly it is far from conscious yet, but the possibility is there, and it has at least been consciously envisaged.

Seen in this perspective, human history represents but

the tiniest portion of the time man has before him; it is only the first ignorant and clumsy gropings of the new type, born heir to so much biological history. The constant setbacks, the lack of improvement in certain respects for over two thousand years, are seen to be phenomena as natural as the tumbles of a child learning to walk or the deflection of a sensitive boy's attention by the need of making a living.

The broad facts remain. Life has progressed, even before man was first evolved. Life progressed by evolving man. Man has progressed during the half million or so years from the first Hominidae, even during the ten thousand years since the final amelioration of climate after the Ice Age. And the potentialities of progress which are revealed, once his eyes have been opened to the evolutionary vista, are unlimited.

At last we have an optimistic instead of a pessimistic theory of this world and our life upon it. Admittedly the optimism cannot be facile, and must be tempered with reflection on the length of time involved, on the hard work that will be necessary, on the inevitable residuum of accident and unhappiness that will remain. Perhaps we had better call it a melioristic rather than an optimistic view; but at least it preaches hope and inspires to action.

I believe very definitely that it is among human personalities that there exist the highest and most valuable achievements of the universe—or at least the highest and most valuable achievements of which we know or, apparently, can have knowledge. That means that I believe that the state exists for the development of individual lives, not individuals for the development of the state.

But I also believe that the individual is not an isolated, separate thing. An individual is a transformer of matter and experience; it is a system of relations between its own basis and the universe, including other individuals. An individual may believe that he should devote himself entirely to a cause, even sacrifice himself to it—his country, truth, art, love. It is in the devotion or the sacrifice that he becomes most himself; it is because of the devotion or sacrifice of individuals that causes become of value. But of course the individual must in many ways subordinate himself to the community—only not to the extent of believing that in the community resides any virtue higher than that of the individuals which compose it.

The community provides the machinery for the existence and development of individuals. There are those who deny the importance of social machinery, who assert that the only important thing is a change of heart, and that the right machinery is merely a natural consequence of the right inner attitude. This appears to me mere solipsism. Different kinds of social machinery predispose to different inner attitudes. The most admirable ma-

chinery is useless if the inner life is unchanged; but social machinery *can* affect the fulness and quality of life. Social machinery can be devised to make war more difficult, to promote health, to add interest to life. Let us not despise machinery in our zeal for fulness of life, any more than we should dream that machinery can ever automatically grind out perfection of living.

I believe in diversity. Every biologist knows that human beings differ in their hereditary outfits, and therefore in the possibilities that they can realize. Psychology is showing us how different are the types that jostle each other on the world's streets. No amount of persuasion or education can make the extrovert really understand the introvert, the verbalist understand the lover of handicraft, the non-mathematical or non-musical person understand the passion of the mathematician or the musician. We can try to forbid certain attitudes of mind. We could theoretically breed out much of human variety. But this would be a sacrifice. Diversity is not only the salt of life but the basis of collective achievement. And the complement of diversity is tolerance and understanding. This does not mean rating all values alike. We must protect society against criminals; we must struggle against what we think wrong. But just as if we try to understand the criminal we shall try to reform rather than merely to punish, so we must try to understand why we judge others' actions as wrong, which implies trying to understand the workings of our own minds and discounting our own prejudices.

Finally, I believe that we can never reduce our principles to any few simple terms. Existence is always too various and too complicated. We must supplement principles with faith. And the only faith that is both concrete and comprehensive is in life, its abundance and its progress. My final belief is in life.

In the Wind

THE CONSERVATIVE Chicago *Tribune* recently launched a bitter attack on the WPA, charging "loafing" on Chicago projects. But illustrations adorning the articles betrayed the bias behind the accusation. A picture appearing in the paper's final edition showed two men leaning idly on their shovels. Upon investigation WPA officials reported that the same picture, when it appeared in early editions, showed a background of men busily working; it was reduced to a single column and the background blotted out for the final edition. Another illustration of "shovel-leaners" carried this caption: "Two men employed on River Grove sewer projects discuss distribution of tomatoes bought from peddler." There is no WPA project in the area specified; the only sewer construction there is by a private company.

THE FATE of baseball in contemporary Japan evoked wide controversy during a "reevaluation" of the nation's sports program. It is authoritatively reported that the Education Min-

istry impressed the chairman of the Tokyo University baseball league with the necessity for "more seriousness" in the conduct of the game. He warned that in the next spring series "bats, balls, and gloves must be handled with loving care such as a samurai would expend on his sword. . . . The habit of tossing gloves in one direction or another between 'raps' must now be abandoned. Also the contending teams must line up and bow to each other before the game, in accordance with the old samurai custom."

AN UNPUBLICIZED case growing out of the settlement of the estate of the late Lord Astor, American expatriate and British nobleman, was recently decided in the United States Circuit Court of Appeals. At issue was the motive behind Lord Astor's creation of certain trusts. The government insisted that his motive was to evade American estate taxes; attorneys for the Astor estate claimed that he had wished to evade a capital tax then being planned by the British government. The court decided that the two aims were not inconsistent and that both might readily have been behind the trusts' formation.

BEHIND THE war headlines a sharp controversy has been raging among White Russians scattered throughout Europe, especially in Bulgaria and Yugoslavia. Many of these exiles have been turning to Hitler as their prospective deliverer, and the shift of allegiance has alarmed Grand Duke Cyril, whose followers have always viewed him as the Czar in exile. Recently a magnificent Greek Orthodox church was built in Berlin; shortly afterward a congress of the Russian émigré clergy near Belgrade, replying to a message from Cyril, addressed him as "Excellence"—but the same meeting sent a letter of thanks to Hitler hailing him as "Savior." The pro-Hitler émigrés believe that the Führer is planning not the conquest of Russia but its deliverance to representatives of the true faith.

SOME WEEKS ago this column noted that the Japanese press had quoted Major General James G. Harbord, president of RCA, as urging foreigners to "withhold judgment" of Japanese policy in Asia. Upon his recent return to the United States, General Harbord delivered a series of national broadcasts describing his travel impressions. He said, among other things, "Whatever actuated this undeclared war in China, I cannot resist the conviction that Japan is now fighting the battle of the Western world against a Communistic Asia."

WHEN SENATOR Edward R. Burke, ardent foe of the NLRB, returned from Europe last week, the New York *Herald Tribune* reported that "he praised without stint the accomplishments of the Nazi regime in Germany." The New York *Times* simultaneously published an account of Burke's interview with the ship reporters but did not mention his impressions of Germany. Its article was headlined: "Burke, Back, Urges 'Freeing' of Labor."

[We invite our readers to submit material for *In the Wind*—either clippings with source and date or stories that can be clearly authenticated. A prize of \$5 will be awarded each month for the best item.—EDITORS THE NATION.]

Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

The Price of Peace

"OPEN covenants of peace, openly arrived at"—this is about the best that one can say of the horrible tragedy which has been enacted under the eyes of the entire world. True, the actual sessions of the latest Big Four—ominous number!—were secret. Still we knew pretty well what was going on although we do not yet know the whole of the fearful price which has been paid for peace. That we may not learn for months or years. I, for one, consider that nothing else was possible under the circumstances. That does not mean that I acquit Chamberlain (and Baldwin) and Daladier (and his predecessors) of their guilt in this surrender, for 90 per cent surrender it is—an almost complete triumph for Hitler. Not at all.

The disaster at Munich was only the final act in a long series of events going back to the early days of the Hitler regime. Czechoslovakia was lost when the Allies permitted Hitler to destroy the German Republic; when without protest they permitted him to outrage the world by his fiendish cruelties to the Jews and the dissenting liberals, Socialists, and Communists; when they allowed him to rebuild the army the Allies fought for four years to destroy, and to remilitarize the Rhineland; when England officially approved Hitler's tearing up of the Treaty of Versailles by making a separate naval agreement with him.

Czechoslovakia's doom was actually sealed when England yielded to Mussolini's threats in connection with Ethiopia; when England and France jointly permitted the ruin of Spain by Franco. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that the fate of Czechoslovakia and of Europe was determined when the Allies—and the United States—failed to live up to their own obligations to disarm, as they had solemnly obligated themselves to do under the Treaty of Versailles. The Munich catastrophe is but the reaping of the harvest that was sown by these dreadful blunders, these betrayals of humanity. British and French weakness was the food on which this Hitler "grew so great."

Beyond doubt Chamberlain will be widely praised. Already it is written that he has set a new precedent in human affairs by putting his pride in his pocket and going to Hitler himself. No doubt the Commons will cheer him again when he next appears before them. But then will come the cold, clear morning after; then the

needless price that has been paid will be visible—after the first joy that Europe has been saved from final disaster. Let no one be deceived: if the Allies continue to yield in this way, their doom is also sealed. The British Empire's prestige is shattered all over the world. It faces a Moslem holy war all through the Near East, directly incited by Mussolini, as he admitted when he signed his not yet enforced treaty with Great Britain and agreed in it to desist.

Neville Chamberlain may believe Hitler's promise that now, having destroyed Czechoslovakia—at least rendered it economically so weak that it is questionable whether what is left can survive—he will be good and seek no more "Germans" and no more territory. No one else can place any faith in his words when he has written in "Mein Kampf" that he would use any chicanery or deceit to achieve his ends and that he will never rest until France is reduced to the point where it is no longer a menace or rival to Germany. Worst of all is the exclusion of Russia from the whole procedure; for that alone France and England will pay dear. It is quite clear that England will not lift a finger if Hitler now turns on Moscow.

Only two things give me a little consolation. One is that the whole world has "listened in" on this affair; millions have known each hour what was happening where not dozens were aware of the international intrigues and councils which led to the crash of 1914, and they have understood what happened. A friend tells me of seeing seven men—attendants and customers—with their heads in a car in a Vermont filling station listening to the radio. "For God's sake," said one of them to him as he approached the car, "Chamberlain's gone to Munich to see Hitler. What do you know about that?"

The other is the undeniable fact that there was a tremendous wave of opposition to Hitler and the Nazi program within Germany itself. The people did not want war and especially did not want a Nazi-created war, and they said so openly. For this statement I rely not merely on dispatches but on the report of eyewitnesses—one an American cleric who has just landed here, a man who speaks German and knows Germany like a book and has been there for months. It is possible that Hitler's victory may eventually prove a defeat for him at home, though his triumph at Munich will doubtless postpone that day.

BOOKS *and the* ARTS

THUCYDIDES IN PRAGUE

[Thucydides avowedly wrote his great "History of the Peloponnesian War" in the hope that "those who desire an exact knowledge of the past as a key to the future, which in all probability will repeat or resemble the past" would find it profitable. The following section is taken from the Fifth Book of the "History," which deals with the tenth year of the war followed by the interval of "insecure peace." It is condensed from the Jowett translation and remains as it was written by the historian with the exception of a few deletions and the substitution of the Czechs for the Melians, the Nazis for the Athenians, and the British for the Lacedaemonians. The time was 416 B. C. instead of 1938 A. D.—ARCHIBALD MACLEISH.]

THE scene is an office in a state building in Prague. There are present three high functionaries of the Czechoslovak Republic with their secretaries and interpreters and three officials of the German Nazi Party with their entourage. The time is the summer of 1938. The two parties seat themselves at opposite sides of a table.

THE NAZIS: Let us have no set speeches at all but do you reply to each several statement of which you disapprove, and criticize it at once. Say first of all how you like this mode of proceeding.

THE CZECHS: The quiet interchange of explanations is a reasonable thing, and we do not object to that. But your warlike movements, which are present not only to our fears but to our eyes, seem to belie your words. We see that although you may reason with us you mean to be our judges; and that, at the end of the discussion, if the justice of our cause prevail and we therefore refuse to yield we may expect war; if we are convinced by you, slavery.

THE NAZIS: We Germans will use no fine words; we will not go out of our way to prove at length that we have a right to rule because we overthrew the Austrians; or that we now attack you because we have suffered any injury at your hands. We should not convince you if we did. But you and we should say what we really think, and aim only at what is possible, for we both alike know that into the discussion of human affairs the question of justice only enters where the pressure of necessity is equal, and that the powerful exact what they can and the weak grant what they must.

THE CZECHS: Well, then, since you set aside justice and invite us to speak of expediency, in our judgment it is certainly expedient that you should respect a principle which is for the common good, that to every man when in peril a reasonable claim should be accounted a claim of right. Your interest in this principle is quite as great as ours, inasmuch as you, if you fall, will incur the heaviest vengeance and will be the most terrible example to mankind.

THE NAZIS: The fall of our empire, if it should fall, is not an event to which we look forward with dismay; for ruling states such as Great Britain are not cruel to their vanquished enemies. And we are fighting not so much against the British as against our own subjects, who may some day rise up and overcome their former masters. But this is a danger which you may leave to us. And we will now endeavor to show that we have come in the interests of our empire, and that in what we are about to say we are only seeking the preservation of your city. For we want to make you ours with the least trouble to ourselves, and it is for the interests of us both that you should not be destroyed.

THE CZECHS: It may be to your interest to be our masters, but how can it be ours to be your slaves?

THE NAZIS: To you the gain will be that by submission you avert the worst; and we shall be all the richer for your preservation.

THE CZECHS: But must we be your enemies? Will you not receive us as friends if we are neutral and remain at peace with you?

THE NAZIS: No, your enmity is not half so mischievous to us as your friendship; for the one is, in the eyes of our subjects, an argument of our power, the other of our weakness. They think that states like yours are left free because they are able to defend themselves.

THE CZECHS: But do you not recognize another danger? For, once more, since you drive us from the plea of justice and press upon us your doctrine of expediency, we must show you what is for our interest, and, if it be for yours also, may hope to convince you: will you not be making enemies of all who are now neutrals? When they see how you are treating us they will expect you some day to turn against them; and if so, are you not strengthening the enemies whom you already have, and bringing upon you others who, if they could help, would never dream of being your enemies at all?

THE NAZIS: We do not consider our really dangerous enemies to be any of the people inhabiting Western Europe, who, secure in their freedom, may defer indefinitely any measures of precaution which they take against us, but small Central European powers who, like you, happen to be under no control and are already irritated by the necessity of submission to our empire—these are our real enemies, for they are the most reckless and most likely to bring themselves as well as us into a danger which they cannot but foresee.

THE CZECHS: We know only too well how hard the struggle must be against your power and against fortune if she does not mean to be impartial. Nevertheless, we do not despair of fortune; for we hope to stand as high as you in the favor of heaven, because we are righteous, and you against whom we contend are unrighteous; and we are satisfied that our deficiency in power will be compensated by the aid of our allies, the British; they cannot refuse to help us for the sake of their own honor.

THE NAZIS: When you imagine that out of very shame the British will help you we admire the simplicity of your idea, but we do not envy you the folly of it. The British are exceedingly virtuous among themselves, and according to their national standard of morality. But in respect to their dealings with others, although many things might be said, a word is enough to describe them—of all men whom we know they are the most notorious for identifying what is pleasant with what is honorable, and what is expedient with what is just.

THE CZECHS: That is the very reason why we trust them; they will look to their interest and therefore will not be willing to betray the Czechs, lest they should be distrusted by their friends and play into the hands of their enemies.

THE NAZIS: But do you not see that the path of expediency is safe, whereas justice and honor involve danger in practice, and such dangers the British seldom care to face?

THE CZECHS: On the other hand we think that whatever perils there may be, they will be ready to face them for our sakes, and will consider danger less dangerous where we are concerned.

THE NAZIS: Excellent. But what encourages men who are invited to join in a conflict is clearly not the goodwill of those who summon them to their side but a decided superiority in real power. To this no men look more keenly than the British.

THE CZECHS: But they may send their allies.

THE NAZIS: Help may come from Britain to you as it has come to others, and should you ever have actual experience of it, then you would know that never once have the Germans retired from a siege through fear of a foe elsewhere. You told us that the safety of your city would be your first care, but we remark that in this long discussion not a word has been uttered by you which

would give a reasonable man expectation of deliverance. Reflect once more when we have withdrawn and say to yourselves over and over again that you are deliberating about your one and only country, which may be saved or may be destroyed by a single decision.

The meeting breaks up.

BOOKS

Science for the Million

SCIENCE FOR THE CITIZEN. By Lancelot Hogben. Alfred A. Knopf. \$5.

FEW men have both the intellectual ability and the social outlook necessary to write a book of this stature. Lancelot Hogben has written of science from out of the depths of his knowledge, yet he has not divorced it from everyday life or made it seem the playground of the wizard and the aesthete. His concept of science is so fundamental that many a scientist may read this book with profit. "Science is organized workmanship. Its history is coextensive with that of civilized living. It emerges so soon as the secret lore of the craftsman overflows the dam of oral tradition, demanding a permanent record of its own." Today the dam of oral tradition is lost in the depths of the printing press, but other obstacles have arisen to impede the free flow of discovery. Not the least of these has been the aloofness of the scientist from the layman. It was not always so, and Hogben, in the tradition of Faraday, Huxley, and Tyndall, writes of science in such a way that the average man can understand both the history of discovery and in some cases the reason for present researches.

No one who has read "Mathematics for the Million" need be told that Hogben is an engaging writer. His story of discovery and social application keeps a steady pace, reaching its highest point in the section on biology, where the author is most at home. The reader is introduced to difficult subjects with a simplicity that high-school teachers would do well to cultivate. The impact of science on society and, in turn, of society on science, is continually brought out. The science of measuring time gave rise to the clock-maker's art; but it was the use of the clock by priest and navigator that led to the building of instruments of high precision; which in turn led to further scientific discovery. So today the scientific discovery of wireless by Hertz and Marconi may well be appraised as a powerful factor in the disruption of the Rome-Berlin axis. There is no separation possible of science from society.

To catalogue the contents of the book would be to recite the encyclopedia, and would give no hint of the interconnection of ideas. Many old facts are put into such new context as to give them modern significance:

Coincident with the public menace of epidemics, which reached a climax in the Great Plague, two significant occurrences which have not been mentioned also merit comment. One is the publication of the "Bills of Mortality" which represent the first recognition that the census

of population should be concerned with health as well as with taxation and the mobilization of military resources. The other was the beginnings of life insurance. These bore fruit in the noteworthy pamphlets of Graunt and Petty and in the construction of the first life table for the calculation of annuities in one of the earliest numbers of the "Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society" (1693). Halley's Life Table is of dual interest. It signals the beginnings of practical encouragement for medical science in conformity with the interests of the financier.

Physics, chemistry, biology, and sociology are not packed into the watertight compartments invented for them by the college syllabus, but intermingle as they actually do outside the cloister walls. The entire work is splendidly illustrated by J. F. Horrabin, some of whose depictions rival the author's descriptions in their clarity. At the end of each chapter is presented a group of related problems. This is in keeping with the stated function of the book—self-education for the masses. Hogben takes his place as the outstanding humanitarian in science.

HUGH H. DARBY

An Educated Man's Daughter

THREE GUINEAS. By Virginia Woolf. Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$2.50.

VIRGINIA WOOLF'S three petitioners got their three guineas—one for a women's-college building fund, one for a society promoting the employment of professional women, and one to help prevent war and "protect culture and intellectual liberty"; but they also got more than they bargained for. "Guineas are rare, guineas are valuable," says Mrs. Woolf in a familiar cadence, and she is much too complicated a person to give her money without speculating on the value she will receive for it, the uses to which it will be put, and the possible connection among her three charities. She sets herself down as an Englishwoman, "an educated man's daughter," a liberal intellectual, a special product of the upper and moneyed middle class whose daughters were blessed beyond their aristocratic or working-class sisters with brains, books, privileges, decent homes, and wholesome culture; she is also an artist. By this self-portraiture she acknowledges herself a highly specialized product of progressive liberalism and gentility, and she knows by what a long struggle she came into that hard-won sanctum of her class—a room of her own. Yet she enters it with a guilty conscience, for she is aware that modern woman, having gained her measure of freedom from the "prostituted culture and intellectual slavery" of the male-dominated world, is finding it only too easy to slip into that world's pattern of vanity, muddle, and violence.

She admits—though she considers their tardy arrival as still something of a miracle—the triumphs of feminist reform in the past eighty years: civil rights, women's colleges, domestic freedom, professional standing, full citizenship, and at last the vote. She also knows that these gifts of fortune still apply to a fairly microscopic portion of society—her own. The modern woman still lacks the real status and prestige of her rights. She stands at the mere edge of politics, government, economic reform, university education, and intellectual leadership. She has not found her own weapons of

offense and competition, and the headlong pace of the Western world toward self-destruction leaves her standing on the sidelines in dismay, self-doubt, and a tormenting suspicion that man's world was hardly worth the long labor of her challenge and conquest. And the saddest aspect of the educated man's daughter's plight is that she, the best-educated, professionally equipped woman, still remains the weakest instrument of justice in the modern state.

Mrs. Woolf writes with the humility of her limitations, which are further specialized by her nationality and her artistic status. The problem she describes is, like the Englishwoman's belated emancipation from incredible suppressions, hard for an American to appreciate in its full outlines. In the pioneer society of the United States the feminist reformer never labored under the disabilities of her English sisterhood. Here, where the matriarchal ideal was strong from the first, women passed on a tradition of culture, taste, and moral leadership. They had their colleges, seminaries, property, household keys, and citizenship. They compelled men and stamped society in a way that Englishmen, until after the war, hardly dreamed of. But it is the very extremity of the Englishwoman's position that gives her a dramatic value. Two generations ago she was still a domestic and social puppet, coerced by dominant fathers and husbands, denied the rudiments of systematic education, enslaved by antiquated social and economic standards. By 1870 she had her colleges; by slow degrees she was allowed to earn her living; her professional value enabled her to take part in a great war; and as a reward for that femininely deplorable activity she got the vote. The logic of this progress was the logic of sheer necessity and desperation. It is now time to bring it to a halt and declare a new tactic of feminine purpose. Mrs. Woolf would do it by casting the word "feminist" and all it connotes from the working vocabulary of reform; by extirpating from the consciousness of woman her last shred of envy for man's symbols of ascendancy and systems of power—his gowns, wigs, keys, badges, miters, and robes; by renouncing the fetishes and tyrannies of social convention; by forming an "Outsider's Society" which will make isolation and conscientious passiveness a law for all enlightened women who would struggle "by their own methods for liberty, equality, and peace."

Mrs. Woolf argues this with characteristic art and ingenuity—and under the handicaps of both. The crisp and convincing edge of "A Room of One's Own" here gives way to her most web-woven and wire-drawn mannerisms. Her talent as a novelist has multiplied her sensibilities and fretted her mind at the risk of enervating her argument. Her pages glance, digress, quote, and play about her subject to the point of dazing the reader in his struggle to extract its central force and to grasp its slippery sleights of continuity. And if he penetrates the mesh of allusions and ellipses he is likely to find that the manner is not altogether unsuited to the matter: that her argument, for all its realism, courage, and seriousness, is on certain fundamental points as evasive as her exposition. She begins by admitting the economic necessity that brought about the emancipation of women in the last hundred years, but avoids it when debating the solution of the problem of war. She clouds her issues by appeals to feminine aloofness and superiority, by a strain of something very like nineteenth-century genteel quietism, when she is

confronted by the necessity of correcting the fact that societies release "what is most selfish and violent, least rational and humane in individuals themselves." Far from coming to terms with the positive and militant advantages of working-women, she retreats to arguments of feminine superiority or isolation when she faces the social and economic conflicts upon which the workingwoman has made some impression by the courage of her equality with the workingman. And it would take more space than the present occasion allows to trace the subtle evasions and dilemmas which Mrs. Woolf confers upon many aspects of her ramifying discussion—dilemmas which are often and too obviously the result of a collision between the lady and the artist in her own temperament and which her noblest impulses of social and humanitarian justice have not been able to resolve.

These difficulties entangle the reader despite the limpid seductions and crowding interests of Mrs. Woolf's pages, but after they are admitted, one must also admit that she has written a remarkable—in its best parts a brilliant—book. She knows the full import of her problem; she knows her highly specialized approach to it; she writes with art and with great richness of reference; she takes her place among the small number of vocally gifted spokesmen in a movement which has been long on energy and heroic courage but short on literary talent. Her logic and force might have been stronger had she been less of an artist, but had she been less of an artist she would probably have left her study in the formulated pattern of propaganda or scholarship. Her fifty pages of notes form a fascinating compendium of social lore and human ironies, and when Mrs. Woolf's gifts of social range and economic reasoning become as great as her skill in quick-eyed and quick-connecting imagination, she may be able to compose a complete manifesto for the future activities of her sex. That work will probably fall on her descendants, but meanwhile she may bow across the decades to Mary Astell, Mary Wollstonecraft, Margaret Fuller, and Ellen Key with her offering of two pamphlets to their classic sheaf.

MORTON DAUWEN ZABEL

Fascism in Latin America

THE COMING STRUGGLE FOR LATIN AMERICA. By Carleton Beals. J. P. Lippincott Company. \$3.

"THE coming struggle" for Latin America has come. Latin America, a vast, wealthy, half-exploited reservoir of raw materials in peace time and an important source of supplies in war time, is the valuable kitty in the sharp game of imperialism being played by Japan, Germany, Italy, Russia, England, and the United States.

Guatemala excepted, there is not a single Latin American country which is not experiencing fascist infiltration. From Cuba and Mexico to the Argentine and Chile, the fascist powers are weaving a close network of economic, political, diplomatic, and military influence, chiefly at the expense of British and American interests. If today Russia is no longer a contender in the game, this is due to the thorny fact that the Third International's initial excursions in South America a few years back ended in fiasco—although, as Mr. Beals suggests, Russia's chance may come again.

Latin America is fertile ground for imperialisms. The tremendous wealth of the area cannot be exploited by native capital and ingenuity alone. Labor is cheap, and manufactured goods must be imported. Politics are often unstable, and governments are in need of foreign funds to bolster up their support at home. Basically, the Latin American economy is agricultural and "semi-colonial."

Moreover, Latin America is particularly fertile ground for fascist expansion. The continent is spotted with large colonies of Germans, Italians, and Japanese. Today these expatriates are organized along intensely nationalistic lines. In many places fascism is home-grown, but the present ominously increased prestige of Italy, Japan, and Germany in Hispanic America. In addition, the clergy, landowners, industrialists, and army officers have instinctively never been altogether averse to fascist doctrine.

In recent years this fertile ground has been plowed and sown in systematic fashion. South American trade, industry, education, press, radio, communications, politics, and armaments have fallen increasingly into the hands of the fascist powers. In the harvest that they are beginning to reap, Italian influence, strong in Brazil, overwhelming in Peru, and important in Argentina, is expanding, and in alliance with German and Japanese efforts "may well bring the European struggle to American shores." Japan's "commerce and cultural influence to the south of us—though it may be weakened by defeat in China—in the long run is apt to increase rather than decrease," while "for another war Germany is far better prepared in South America than before. The equivalent of strong Nazi regimes exists in several countries."

This shifting balance of power among rival imperialisms has been mainly, as in Europe, the Mediterranean basin, and Asia, at the expense of the English. "Despite all her efforts, she is slipping badly," and even in the Argentine, where British capital and influence are paramount, Italian competition is steadily increasing.

The United States, on the other hand, is "far from being beaten in the struggle to control southern countries. And with our new government push southward, we are expending more efforts than any single European power." We have lost a good part of our commercial advantage southward, but under the cloak of pan-Americanism and the good-neighbor policy, we are still trying to keep Latin American countries in the position of "dutiful little colonies" under our tutelage. In this, Mr. Beals believes, we are making a grave mistake. He believes that Roosevelt, Hull, and Welles are inadvertently aiding the rise of fascism to the south of us by lending support to the fascist-minded regimes that already flourish and by imitating fascist methods of propaganda which, in the long run, will only make our southern neighbor more suspicious of us. "The only possibility for sound American influence in Latin America," Mr. Beals concludes, "is to stand squarely with the democratic and progressive forces of those countries. We can gain nothing by imitating the political tactics of the fascist powers, though we might learn something in the field of economics."

As an American free-lance correspondent of long standing in the Hispanic world, Carleton Beals knows whereof he speaks. He goes out on the limb of excited prophecy at times

—it is difficult to believe that war between Brazil and Argentina is as imminent as he suggests, or that American policy is on the whole as muddle-headed as he pictures it—but for the most part he is very judicious. His book is important, objective reading, and as a source book on what is brewing south of the Rio Grande it is indispensable.

JULIAN BACH, JR.

Literature in Clay

THEY WROTE ON CLAY. THE BABYLONIAN TABLETS SPEAK TODAY. By the late Edward Chiera. Edited by George G. Cameron. University of Chicago Press. \$3.

NEAR EAST archaeologists have been finding so much "Oriental influence" that we look eastward for our cultural beginning. Meanwhile, with Botta, Rawlinson, and Layard showing the way, Assyriologists have unlocked for learned students the records from Kouyounjik and other clay tablets. Sayce in his "Babylonian Literature" and now the late Professor Chiera have opened the door for all. We do well to enter by reading "They Wrote on Clay," even though we are ignorant of the Sumerian treasures in Assyrian cuneiform or prejudiced against Assyrian "barbarism in the robes of civilization."

Professor Chiera, no mere treasure-seeking archaeologist, both emphasizes the value to cultural history of the record and describes the tablets themselves, their locale, materials, and form, their numbers and their uses. He explains and illustrates the cuneiform, developing from pictograph to phonetic symbol its distribution from Boghazkeui to Tel-el-Amarna and its alphabetic form at Ras Shamir. The illustrations are many and good. Of the cuneiform culture itself we read: "Practically all existing literature is put down in written form a century or two after 2000 B. C." Will someone write of us: "There was practically no European literature after Hadrian"? We may read how astronomy begins in astrology, medicine in magic, science in empiricism, mathematics in commerce, law in contract and administration, literature, philosophy, religion in myth, cosmogony, superstition. Babylonian legends parallel Biblical stories as to plot, background, and language. Even archaeology dates from Ashurbanipal, a collector of clay tablets in his day (600 B. C.).

By direct inheritance of this culture we count time by Babylonian sexagesimal system. Indirect inheritance is shown in the transformations of the Tiamat legend: Sumerian Entil, Babylonian Marduk, Assyrian Ashur, Hebrew Jehovah, Christian St. George triumph over the same Chaos. Of social interest are the records of an Assyrian private family whose capitalistic alliance with legalism is exposed. Professor Chiera gives Hammurabi's code, of discouragingly long ago, "Definite purpose of protecting the weak against the strong and making justice available to all." He might have enlarged upon Assyrian records, "by might of the terrible arms," of victory over neighbor and subject, looting, taxing, deporting, boasting, all so inspiring to tyrants of today except for the sequel of overthrow and undying hatred.

ROBERT S. DARBISHIRE

Period Picture

THE FATHERS. By Allen Tate. G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$2.50.

SOMEONE has said that there are two kinds of novels—"War and Peace" and the rest. Debatable as the classification may be, it suggests another, less questionable. Are there three kinds of historical novels—"War and Peace"; novels like "The Three Musketeers," "Ivanhoe," and "Gone with the Wind"; and, thirdly, that largest group of period pictures which frequently have a certain validity and popularity at the time of publication but which, reread anywhere between ten and fifty years later, seem doubly dated, first with the deadness of the period they have tried to reproduce, and, secondly, with the style and mannerisms of the time in which they were written?

The more valid of these books few of us are likely ever to have read, for they failed to achieve popularity even in their own day. Most of us, in our youth, read "Coniston" and "Richard Carvel," "When Knighthood Was in Flower" and "Janice Meredith." But in how many libraries, even soon after its publication, was there a place for Edward Bellamy's "The Duke of Stockbridge," one of the few attempts by an American novelist to tell the exciting and historically significant story of Shay's Rebellion?

Allen Tate's first novel, "The Fathers," although its subject matter is much more familiar, is in its limitations comparable to the little-known novel by the author of that extraordinarily popular book "Looking Backward." "The Duke of Stockbridge" is written in the convention of the late Victorian romantic novel, which is more remote from us than even the picaresque novel or the chronicle. Mr. Tate's approach to his Virginia family in pre-Civil War, and war time is psychologically entirely contemporary. There are no moral values, only an effort to understand and report the inner workings of the minds and emotions of his characters. But the literary device he has chosen is one of the oldest and, unless expertly used, stalest of conventions. An old man tells in the first person the story of his family, their relations to one another and to society, beginning with his fifteenth year in 1858 through the outbreak of the Civil War. The main character is a violent and complex young man, in some ways not unlike Rhett Butler. But seen through the eyes of an old man, described in the inevitably indirect manner of reminiscence, he never becomes three-dimensional or wholly alive to the reader.

Henry James and Mrs. Wharton both experimented endlessly with the device of the narrator, and both have written fully of its dangers and difficulties. I have not the space here to discuss them. Suffice it to say that for Mr. Tate, who until now has been a biographer, and a very distinguished one, this method has been a handicap, if not almost his cancellation as a novelist.

The blurb says that Mr. Tate is "a born story-teller," but this is not true. He is a born biographer perhaps, at least of his own heroes, but a historical novel poses a very different problem from biography. A biography, growing as it does out of known facts, need only establish a historical picture. It is in short a branch of history. A novel, even if it is based on facts, is essentially fiction. It must, in order to be credible,

establish an illusion, the illusion that the past is as real as the present, that in relation to a history-book occasion people behaved just as we would today. And in order successfully to break through the prejudices and taboos that the bad teaching of history, particularly American history, has established in the minds of the reading public, the historical novelist must possess a directness of approach, an impact, which is not essential to the psychological novelist or the story-teller.

That Mr. Tate is incapable of writing an undistinguished book, a book that is not both sensitive and significant, no reader of his poetry or his biography need be told. But he has not as yet mastered the essentials of the novelist's craft. His story is one of violence. This book is composed of scenes of great personal and emotional excitement, all played against the dramatic background of the Civil War at its inception. There is an almost medieval tournament, in which the hero wins his bride. There is the rape of a young girl, beloved by two brothers, by her own mulatto half-brother, and the subsequent murder both of the mulatto by one of her suitors, and of the suitor by her own brother, the mulatto's half-brother. Here is obviously material made for the novelist of action. When Scott and Dumas wrote of such events it was not through the eyes of "an unmarried old man . . . with a competence saved from the practice of medicine."

The character who is suited to Mr. Tate's method is the father, old Major Buchan. "The epitome of the rigid code of chivalry and honor," the blurb says, but he is much more than that. He is the character whom no Northerner, unfamiliar with Virginia, even today, knows. He is the Southerner who believed neither in slavery nor in secession, the patriarch who lived honorably and successfully in a private world, as long as he could ignore the economic system. For the honest understanding of American history he is much the most important character in the book, and in his depiction, more than in anything else, lies the distinction of "The Fathers."

MINA CURTISS

Science as Rhetoric

THE DOCTRINE OF SIGNATURES. By Scott Buchanan. Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$2.75.

MR. BUCHANAN has been actively associated with the educational policy of President Hutchins of the University of Chicago; and as dean of St. John's College, Annapolis, he now has the opportunity to experiment with a radical program of undergraduate instruction, unhampered by unsympathetic academic interests. His present book, though nominally a discussion of medical theory and practice and not a deliberate formulation of educational theory, is therefore of considerable general interest, for it reveals the larger assumptions behind the Annapolis educational experiment and underlying Mr. Buchanan's revolt against established college curricula.

Mr. Buchanan believes that far-reaching analogies, speculatively employed, are essential to a healthy intellectual life. And he is impatient with current tendencies in philosophy and science that aim to interpret the statements of science in terms of the operations which they involve and to which they

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lead. Such tendencies he brands as anti-intellectualistic, and there is little doubt what thinkers head his list of enemies of the intellectual life. Indeed, he finds contemporary science and philosophy badly confused and seriously impaired in their development, partly because of their failure to recognize the analogical character of all language, and partly because of their failure to develop and expand analogies in a properly sophisticated manner. His book therefore offers a general therapy for the serious ills from which contemporary thinking is alleged to suffer.

It is, however, difficult to discover from Mr. Buchanan precisely what it is that is supposed to be troubling modern science and especially medicine, or what is the remedy he is proposing. For he makes no explicit analysis of specific conclusions and procedures of science for their faults, and in spite of his plea for demonstrated discourse he presents no explicit arguments. He is content to remain safely oracular and darkly profound. He reveals an overwhelming nostalgia for the terminology and doctrines of ancient and medieval philosophy, and gives much space to suggesting that the hard-won procedural canons of modern science are simple illustrations of ancient principles; for example, the dogmatic use of authority by the medievals is found to be analogous to the modern use of the norms set up by instruments. It is not easy to avoid the conclusion that Mr. Buchanan wins resounding intellectual victories by playing fast and loose with words. The parlous state of medical theory and practice is attributed by him to the modern neglect of the medieval trivium (grammar, rhetoric, and logic) and of the insights of Greek

rationalism. His specific against the ills he detects is the reinstitution of the trivial studies and the intensive study of Aristotelian logic and of Galen. Since he takes seriously the well-known figure of speech that the scientist is decoding the book of nature, he naturally regards the task of the scientist to be essentially that of the grammarian and rhetorician. This is perhaps the main burden of the book. Mr. Buchanan is convinced that those who will have mastered the trivial arts will be especially well equipped to translate the "language" of nature into the "analogous" language of science and also to supply the first principles for "rational" demonstrations. In the end, everything seems to turn on the mastery of the six allegedly ultimate transcendental distinctions of the medievals, for from them appropriate maxims can be extracted for the conduct of any inquiry.

Mr. Buchanan's central thesis is the radically figurative character of language. When examined in its own terms, it is readily seen to be self-stultifying; for if it were sound, his own statements could not be alleged to be literally true. When it is examined in terms of intellectual traditions, it is found to issue from his uncriticized acceptance of the Platonic interpretation of mathematics and the rationalist conception of inquiry. The fundamental assumptions of these views have long since been expertly catalogued, probed, and devastatingly criticized; and it might have occurred to Mr. Buchanan that modern neglect of the intellectual apparatus he so highly prizes may be due to the sterile and verbal results it yields. However, one can have genuine admiration for the high quality of Greek science and medieval speculation, and yet be dismayed and puzzled by the quality of Mr. Buchanan's latest performance. His book is built on an arresting analogy, but he has not taken the trouble to chart out its limitations or to face seriously his philosophic adversaries. The book is perhaps not a sufficient basis for prejudging Mr. Buchanan's educational experiment. But what can one reasonably hope from the latter if the general assumptions behind it are marked by a conspicuous absence of clarity and logical rigor, and if the unquestionable intellectual gifts of one of its leaders are deliberately used to produce a learned punning?

ERNEST NAGEL

Recent Fiction

OLD HAVEN. By David Cornel DeJong. Houghton Mifflin Company. \$2.50.

Holland is a strange country. Imagine a people so unmilitaristic that children and grown-ups alike turn up their noses at a man in uniform, even shout "Filthy soldier!" at him whenever he shows himself in public. All this because soldiers are symbols of compulsion, and the Dutch are unaccustomed to any compulsion except that of their own stern Calvinist consciences. At least, that's the way it was up to about 1925, according to DeJong's picture of life in the Netherlands, and particularly in the little North Sea village of Witsum, where peace and age-old custom have grown into the very walls of the houses, the stones of the dike, the lives of the townsfolk. Here Tjerk Mellema grows up; here he brings his modern young wife, Antoinette, to set the town by the ears. Don't come to the book looking for the simpering little-Dutch-mill-

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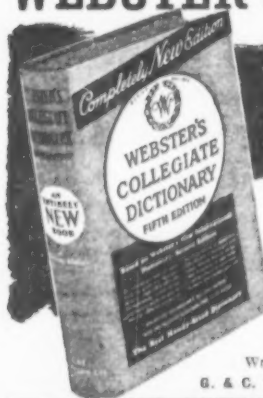
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on-a-little-Dutch-hill type so dear to the sentimental American heart; here are real flesh-and-blood people, fisher folk, landmen, builders, stolid burghers, grim-faced religious fanatics, passionate rebels. They are no blue-china miniatures; even Holland, to them, is not small—it is their world, and its intersectional differences are felt almost as strongly as those of our own country. "Old Haven" is the fifth of the Houghton Mifflin Fellowship books, and, while it is not likely to rank in popularity with its predecessor, "Young Man with a Horn," it is an eminently readable novel that deserves a public. Mr. DeJong is a native Hollander who spent the first thirteen years of his life in just such a village as he uses for the setting of his story.

DYNASTY OF DEATH. By Taylor Caldwell, Charles Scribner's Sons. \$2.75.

Joseph Barbour, servant to an English squire, brought into the world two sons, Martin and Ernest. Martin was soft, idealistic, a dreamer, easily hurt, a born fugitive from reality. Ernest was an absolute realist, his sole emotion a lust for wealth and power, in pursuit of which he would crush men, institutions, theories as he would crush a cricket underfoot, without passion or anger, simply because such destruction served his purpose. Coming to America with his father, Ernest entered the small armament firm of Barbour and Bouchard, founded by his uncle and a French émigré. In twenty years he made it a tremendous munitions firm, with himself as its head; in fifty years his company had become an international power, controlling railroads, mines, newspapers, and governments, and working hand in hand with European armament-makers—called by fictitious names in the book, but obviously Krupp, Schneider-Creusot, Armstrong-Vickers, and Skoda. But just as his business flourished on death and hatred, his touch brought death to those whom he, in his driving, acquisitive fashion, most nearly loved—his father, his brother, his children, and Amy Drumhill. All of this has the making of a powerful story, and certainly if mere bulk can add value, the eight hundred pages of "Dynasty of Death" should clinch its place as an important book, but unfortunately its epic framework is sadly obscured by a welter of genealogical data and family trivia intended to make the reader minutely acquainted with every one of the fifty-two leading characters whom the author has obligingly listed in a dramatis personae at the beginning of the book. Nevertheless, the figure of Ernest Barbour stands out in impressive silhouette, repellent yet not unsympathetic, against the background of more flexible men and women who struggle, usually in vain, against the relentless steam-roller of his will. While the above-named foreign armament firms and a few historical personages are introduced, there seems to be no direct parallel between the story of Barbour and Bouchard and that of any actual American manufacturer.

THE TRIAL OF HELEN McLEOD. By Alice Beal Parsons. Funk and Wagnalls Company. \$2.50.

Here is an example of that most annoying literary phenomenon, a novel that is much duller than it needs to be. The hero of the story, for all practical purposes, is the late Clarence Darrow in person, defending civil liberties in a synthetic Middle Western town in 1920 during the post-war vogue of

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red-baiting. There's literary gold in those hills, but "The Trial of Helen McLeod," by some subtle alchemy, turns out to be mostly pyrites. For one thing, the proportion is sadly out of joint: the trial, which is the only really blood-quicken- ing part of the book (and incidentally it isn't the trial of Helen McLeod, but of one of her confederates), doesn't begin till page 276. Three-fourths of the book is flooded with irritatingly irrelevant small-talk and rehashings of social theory that may have sounded dangerous in 1920 but today are merely trite, but in the very places where we should most like to have vivid detail—for instance, in Darrow's closing speech to the jury—the author frequently summarizes. Another structural weakness is that the author herself seems uncertain which character should occupy the center of sympathy, and she is constantly pushing one into the background and pulling another into the glare of the footlights—Helen McLeod, Darrow, Oles Anderson (the man actually on trial), an idealistic college professor, and so on. The dialogue is often stilted, and even the narrative style labored and periphrastic. In college composition classes you are flirting with the blue pencil if you write of a dinner: "Altogether it was an inviting scene, and the guests surveyed its many subtle promises with unalloyed enthusiasm and verve." But that's only one of many such sentences in the Parsons book. And it's too bad, because there's an opening for a good novel about Darrow; yes, one that you can read with unalloyed enthusiasm and verve.

DRAMA

Dame Who?

THE first substantial play of the new season is still to come. While awaiting it one may find a certain amount of mild interest in the odd little work called "Dame Nature" which Patricia Collinge has translated from the French and the Theater Guild produced at the Booth Theater. A few, I imagine, are going to like it very much indeed. The rest, I fear, will complain that it lacks that *sine qua non* of the drama—a breath of life.

The story sounds horrendous enough, for it is concerned with a French schoolboy (*aetat.* sixteen) who finds himself the father of a child by a fifteen-year-old girl. The author has, however, avoided both melodrama and the psychology of sex in order to imagine a sort of idyl, told with witty and humorous embellishments but depending chiefly for its appeal upon the sentiment and pathos which always lie just below the surface and which from time to time rise above it. The writing, like that of many contemporary French plays, is suave, deft, and "civilized," but it is also without force or energy; taste is everywhere apparent but of creative imagination there is not a trace. "Dame Nature" does not live, nor is it even—there is a real distinction—intellectually convincing.

That one cannot really believe it is probably due in part to the fact that the author, in order to achieve the idyllic

effect at which he aims, has felt compelled to endow the two protagonists with an almost preternatural purity, and to attribute their predicament not to precocity but to a childlike innocence paralleled only by that of Daphnis and Chloe or Paul and Virginia—an innocence, in other words, which may be acceptable in a pseudo-naive romance but which can hardly be credited in a play that is, after all, superficially realistic. He is so anxious to emphasize the absurd pathos of the child-mother and the child-father that he makes them behave as though they were infants instead of adolescents and seems sometimes to forget that the boy is not six but sixteen.

The almost farcical last scene, in which the boy's mother, having learned something of the situation from an anonymous letter, leaps to the conclusion that it is her husband, not her "baby," who is the responsible party, is well managed and so, too, is the introduction of the quietly suggested moral which points at parents who do not bother to find out what their children are thinking or doing. Yet even here there is something a little unsatisfactory, and one doubts the propriety of proving a thesis so extensively applicable by an example admittedly so extraordinary as to be almost monstrous.

By far the best performance is contributed by Jessie Royce Landis as the vain mother of the erring youth. The latter is played as well as is perhaps possible by Montgomery Cliff, and much the same may be said of the role of the orphan girl, in which Lois Hall is compelled to impersonate a fabulously innocent and yet fabulously self-reliant child-wife, so near perfection as to have no character at all. Last winter I suggested that American audiences were ready for a Little Nell who knew all the four-letter words. Leonie, in "Dame Nature," does not even know the anatomical and physiological facts to which such words refer, but she is a Little Nell who has had a baby and that is something.

In the first act of Clare Booth's "Kiss the Girls Goodby" (Henry Miller Theater) a sophisticate is explaining to a bewildered innocent that she will soon get the hang of smart conversation: all you have to do is be rude. That, unfortunately, is a dangerous conviction for a comic writer to have and goes a long way toward explaining why the wit in both the present play and the same author's success of last year, "The Women," seems less brilliant to me than it does to the audiences which greet it with visceral guffaws. The present play is concerned with a series of wildly farcical events taking place during a Connecticut week-end made hideous by the presence of lewd and drunken "big shots" from New York and Hollywood. Ostensibly the aim is to expose them for the rotters they are, but the play is too noisy and vehement to be taken very seriously and will owe the success to which it is probably destined almost exclusively to the broad and obvious wisecracks with which it is liberally sprinkled. They are vehement and often bawdy, but I belong to a minority which finds them more conspicuously rude and violent than original or funny.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

[In an early issue of The Nation: Eighteen volumes of the American Guide series, compiled by the Federal Writers' Project, will be reviewed in an article by Jared Putnam.]

Letters to the Editors

How Non-partisan Is the Workers' Alliance?

Dear Sirs: "Under Lasser's leadership," says Selden Rodman in his article concerning David Lasser and the Workers' Alliance in *The Nation* of September 10, "democracy, non-partisanship, no discrimination, and militancy in action were firmly established." Perhaps. But recently the Workers' Alliance announced its intention to raise a \$50,000 fund to "help elect its friends to public office." Whatever this is, it is not non-partisanship. Formerly the alliance left old-party politics alone, and concentrated on the direct struggle for jobs and for decent relief. It has been argued, originally by Sam Gompers and more lately by Earl Browder and his followers, that the policy of "rewarding one's friends" is a sound one, but never that it is non-partisan.

In the states of Washington, California, and New York members have been expelled from the Workers' Alliance for their political views. To say, as it has been said, that they were Trotskyites is to affirm rather than to deny the charge that discrimination is practiced within the alliance and on the projects by certain alliance members and officers. In the unemployed division of the New York Workers' Alliance booing and hissing squads are organized at every meeting. Recently they were used to shout down members who rose to disagree with Vito Marcantonio speaking in support of his own candidacy before the "non-partisan" Workers' Alliance.

As to militancy in action, the last time the alliance ran a demonstration in Washington while the New Deal Congress was in session is beyond the memory of man. In New York, City Hall demonstrations have practically been outlawed, though the Mayor and other city officials are responsible for the present relief crisis, which is leaving the local bureaus without funds toward the close of each month.

I resigned as chairman of the New York Workers' Alliance when it became apparent that the organization was losing its non-partisan and militant character and that political discrimination was being practiced by a controlling majority. Since that time the anti-democratic forces in the organization have consoli-

dated their position. The split is on in the Workers' Alliance of New York; how far it will penetrate depends upon whether the alliance continues to depart from the principles of genuine non-partisanship, militancy, and democracy upon which it was founded.

BRENDAN SEXTON,
Vice-President, Workers'
Alliance of America

New York, September 16

Refutation of the Charges

Dear Sirs: Mr. Sexton's public charges against his own organization fall under three headings. Claiming to be militant, democratic, and non-partisan, the Workers' Alliance, he says, is none of these.

Non-partisanship, in the political sense in which that term has always been used in America—for example, by North Dakota's Non-Partisan League and more recently by Labor's Non-Partisan League—means simply that the organization is not affiliated with any political party. To assume that in addition it should fail to distinguish between its political friends and enemies, making no effort to support the one or defeat the other, is incredibly naive. The Workers' Alliance is not a charitable institution or club for the unemployed. It is faced constantly with the effects of the very practical political struggle in which the forces of reaction are trying to strip from labor and the unemployed every advantage they have gained by organization. If the Democratic Party were homogeneously progressive, the Workers' Alliance would certainly affiliate with it. Since it is not, it remains "non-partisan," recognizing, nevertheless, in contrast apparently to Mr. Sexton, a world of difference between a reactionary and a progressive, between a Hoover and a Roosevelt, in whatever party he happens to be.

Democracy, in the Workers' Alliance, is based on the free discussion and voting which take place in the weekly membership meetings of the small neighborhood units. If there has been any exercise of discrimination or dictatorship on the part of the national leadership, I have yet to hear of it. The very presence of Mr. Sexton himself on the National Executive Board would seem to argue against him.

As for militancy, the "memory of

man" will most recently remember the extremely effective National Job March of August, 1937. Congress, afraid of this action, ran out just two days before the marchers arrived. Because the demonstration was well organized and orderly it helped to stop the layoff of hundreds of thousands of WPA workers. Perhaps Mr. Sexton regrets that the alliance has now developed to the point where it is able to get concessions by the power of its organization and influence rather than by bloody battles with the police which arouse the antagonism of the general public.

SELDEN RODMAN

New York, September 21

The "Gum-Miners'" Record

Dear Sirs: The United Rubber Workers of America was born of battle. The strike of the workers in the huge Good-year plant at Akron, Ohio, in the bitter winter of 1936 gave the C. I. O. its first major victory and opened the way to the unionization of the automobile workers. It also gave the young union a militant morale which has served it well through the depression years. The "gum-miners," meeting recently in convention at Trenton, New Jersey, had reason to be proud of their record. Vacations with pay have been won for 95 per cent of the union members. Average wages of rubber workers have been raised 33 1/3 per cent since 1934, with increases for the rank and file as high as \$1,500 in many instances. The six-hour day is standard in tire and tube plants. Moreover, advances have been made by the union in once-sweated districts, and contracts have been signed by employers whose anti-unionism has been notorious for years. Many large plants in the South are still without union protection, but plans were discussed at the Trenton meeting for organizing campaigns below the Mason and Dixon Line.

That the union is no fair-weather friend is evidenced by the work of the relief committees, which function to obtain relief or WPA jobs for out-of-work members. An Educational Department publishes a lively weekly. A legislative committee is on the job to prevent runaways to non-union territory; it is sponsoring a bill introduced by Congressman Herbert Bigelow of Ohio making decentralization of operations

illegal without the permission of the federal government. A financial committee takes care of the bookkeeping of new locals, sixteen of which have been added this past year.

When John Brophy told the rubber workers' delegates that the drive of the C. I. O., far from being checked, as per the wishful thinking of William Green, was going along in good shape, he was talking to progressive-minded, militant unionists who have contributed a large part of the dynamics to that drive. The story of the United Rubber Workers is a definite repudiation of the reactionary charges about labor's irresponsibility and lack of statesmanship.

MCALISTER COLEMAN

Radburn, N. J., September 28

Misplaced Blame

Dear Sirs: Paul Y. Anderson's contributions in *The Nation* are always of the highest order. But in his article on California's Blackshirts he made a mistake when he spoke of the organization responsible for certain outrages in the San Joaquin Valley as the "Farmers' Alliance." The Farmers' Alliance has, historically, a pretty fair reputation as to aims and methods, and the organization Anderson referred to was the Associated Farmers. Even this chosen name is misleading enough, as there are no real dirt farmers in the organization; only some Eastern concerns and California bankers and industrialists.

KARL J. ELLINGTON

Seattle, Wash., September 20

A Weapon Against Hitler

Dear Sirs: As was pointed out by Mr. Villard in your issue of September 24, the British government and its allies, in their efforts to stop Hitler, have failed to avail themselves of far more deadly weapons than guns and airplanes and warships—the boycott and non-intercourse. May I in this connection call the attention of *The Nation's* readers to the fact that Hitler obtained the foreign exchange so vitally needed for his rearmament from those European democracies he wishes to destroy? Germany's exports in 1937 totaled 5,911 million marks, of which 4,093 million marks, or more than 69 per cent, went to European countries. This is sufficient proof that Germany could not stand up against a boycott.

With public opinion in this country so much aroused against the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia, a mass move-

ment in support of the anti-Nazi boycott would be really effective action. At present the boycott is certainly the only peaceful method of combating fascist war-makers.

JUDITH GRUNFELD

New York, September 23

McAdoo at Home

Dear Sirs: A correspondent in your paper states that Senator McAdoo was defeated in the California primaries by the \$30 pension plan. This is decidedly inaccurate. Although the pension planners did not favor him, not all whom they did favor were elected.

The reputation of Mr. McAdoo in his home county accounted for the fact that he was defeated there three to one. In the bankruptcy of Carl Pustau, in the local federal court there was filed the statement of Pustau consisting of 118 pages of charges well-buttressed with 85 exhibits tending to prove that McAdoo's firm had received \$15,000 for work with regard to a contract on our Post Office building. Other contracts and federal positions were mentioned as having been bought and paid for. There was also the very serious charge that a large sum of money was involved in an effort by A. P. Gianinni, of the Bank of America, through the McAdoo firm to make some change in the federal branch-banking law. These are all matters of public record, and were thoroughly publicized by our press.

On behalf of Sheridan Downey, let me state that in April, 1932, he publicly indorsed Roosevelt and has been with him ever since. He is a much more sincere Roosevelt supporter than Senator McAdoo ever was, and his nomination was in no sense a defeat for Roosevelt policies.

MICHAEL RUDOLPH

Los Angeles, September 28

St. John's as Work Project

Dear Sirs: Concerning Mr. Villard's criticism of Bishop Manning's request for a million dollars for work on the Cathedral of St. John, in common justice there is this to be said for it. The greater part of the sum asked for will go direct to labor for quarrying, stone-cutting, and work of like character. For the most part the money will be drawn from wealth which could be put into circulation in no other way. If in these times help is provided for those who pursue the art of the musician, painter, or sculptor, then surely something can be asked for workers in the art of the

builder. Quite apart from one's views on religion, enjoyment may be had from a beautiful building like the cathedral as well as from music and other arts.

HENRY CHEQUER

Kingston, N. H., September 24

Corrections

Dear Sirs: The publisher of Sigrid Undset's "Images in a Mirror," Alfred A. Knopf, has called attention to the fact that the book was first copyrighted in Oslo in 1917. While it has never been translated into English before, it is by no means her latest work—an impression which I unfortunately gave in a review in the issue of September 24.

LOUIS B. SALOMON

Brooklyn, September 29

The broadcasts of George H. Combs, Jr., to which reference was made in last week's issue, are carried by Station WHN.—EDITORS THE NATION.

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